BRILL'S COMPANION TO

INSURGENCY AND TERRORISM IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN



Edited by

Timothy Howe & Lee L. Brice

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Brill's Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism in the Ancient Mediterranean

Brill's Companions in Classical Studies

Warfare in the Ancient Mediterranean World

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

For my mentor, Clifford Minor, whose work on the Bagaudae, from which he regularly drew classroom examples, hammered home the lesson that titles, definitions and terminology matter.

T. H.

For Margaret R. Brice and Shannon C. Brice, who remind me that a little insurgency now and then can be a good thing.

L. L. B.

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Contents

Series Foreword

The Greek philosopher Heracleitus once remarked that war is the father of all things. Since our earliest historians, Herodotus and Thucydides both wrote on war, then perhaps it follows that military history is the father of all historical study. Of course, Greek culture was not the first to have an interest in recording aspects of warfare. Persian, Phoenician, Assyrian, Babylonian, and the many other cultures of the eastern Mediterranean also did so. At the same time, there was more to the works of Heracleitus, Herodotus, and Thucydides than warfare so we should not over emphasize the historically formative power of warfare. Regardless of whether it is actually the "father" of any field, military history has remained popular over the centuries, both with authors and readers.

Military history remains fascinating and full of vitality. The complicated reasons for the popularity of military history are less important than the continuing growth and evolution of the field. Military history still includes old-school discussions, but it is much more than traditional narratives, known as "drums and trumpets." It has grown to include new topics, adopt new approaches and methodologies, and ask new questions of old evidence and problems. These new aspects have taken military history research in directions previously unanticipated, such as "the rhetoric of defeat" or "the neurobiology of combat," and so many other topics. This new work continues to illuminate the interconnections between warfare and all the other facets of life in the ancient world—the many ways they pull and push on each other including society, culture, religion, art, literature, architecture and more. While most of this new work is disseminated through professional conferences, journals, and monographs these are not always readily available to readers interested in the military history of the ancient world. One successful way of making this work more available and the content more accessible is through Companions.

Warfare in the Ancient Mediterranean World, of which *Brill's Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism* is the first volume, contributes depth and diversity to the topics it covers. It aims to disseminate current research to both scholarly and non-specialist students and general readers. Military history has at times been dismissed by specialists in other historical fields as obsolete, but this new series counters those criticisms by providing a setting in which current approaches and methodologies are highlighted so we can demonstrate how traditional themes can coexist with the new and still have a role to play in understanding and explaining the past.

Brill's Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism in the Ancient Mediterranean World draws from the fields of insurgency and terrorism studies for approaches to a number of well-known ancient conflicts. Readers may be aware of the current fascination with counterinsurgency studies and the resulting increase in speculation about ancient responses to conflict. With an ear to this trend and the potential for flawed analyses of ancient conflict, the editors also strove to provide a methodologically grounded model for future work on insurgency or terror in antiquity.

Part of what makes history as a field so endlessly fascinating is its evolution, but there remains much about the ancient world that we still do not know. The series *Warfare in the Ancient Mediterranean World* contributes to filling some of those gaps and pointing the way toward future research.

Lee L. Brice
Series Editor

Preface

At the Annual Meeting of the Association of Ancient Historians in Erie, Pennsylvania, Irene van Rossum, then Brill North American Representative for Classics and Ancient History, and I sat together on a bus going from the conference venue to the banquet. We got to talking about books and the conversation moved round to new subjects and wishlists. Irene asked if I could think of a topic that was not only "new," in the sense of being trendy, but also "worthwhile," in the sense that it could shape the direction of a bourgeoning conversation. Having just finished reading Victor Davis Hanson's edited collection, *Makers of Ancient Strategy: From the Persian wars to the Fall of Rome* (Princeton, 2010), I suggested Insurgency and Terrorism. Ten years after 9/11 seemed the right time for ancient historians to take on the subject, which had been dominated by political science and strategic studies, and begin to grapple with modern tools in ancient contexts. She agreed and this project was born. I did not want to tackle it alone, however, and so sought out Lee L. Brice. Over the next few weeks at cafés and hotels in Athens, where we were both researching other projects, he and I hammered out the proposal and contributor lists. After many agonized discussions over Oxford commas and terminology, we eventually devised the working definitions that framed the research you see here. Without that wonderfully productive give-and-take between two colleagues this project would never have been more than a bus conversation.

We had numerous concerns, of course, as we engaged in this project. The volume had to be useful—it would need to make a positive impact stimulating new scholarship while also providing a tool for the classroom. At the same time we were concerned about fit and acceptance—the volume needed to be received well both in history and in the associated fields already working on insurgency and terrorism. Given that wars were still underway in Iraq and Afghanistan we wanted to avoid editing a book that would be perceived as presentist in the moment—a vindication of current U.S. defense policy or of any particular "side" in the contentious debate over COIN theory-policy. So we consulted many government sources, and waded into conversations normally considered distant from ancient history, but in the end narrowed our gaze to a few core documents (see Brice's Introduction). We also consulted a wide range of research in the fields of insurgency and terrorism studies. The result will, we hope, be enlightening and useful to specialists, students and general readers.

This study is larger than Lee or I and would not have been possible without the support of numerous individuals, especially our spouses Mary Howe and Georgia Tsouvala. We also wish to acknowledge the support of St. Olaf

College, Illinois State University, and the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, each of which provided much needed support and assistance. The book would not have been completed without the support of Jennifer Pavelko and her team at Brill, who have been encouraging and patient in answering all our questions and keeping the volume on track. The maps required the efforts of several individuals including Jeff Becker, Ryan Horne and Gabe Moss of the Ancient World Mapping Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, who made most of the volume maps and gave us permission to reissue some previously released material, and of course Leslie Schramer of the Oriental Institute Publications, who made the maps for chapters two, three, and eight. We are also grateful to our students, colleagues and the anonymous peer reviewers for their helpful comments and insights. All of them contributed to improving the volume, but any errors that remain are our own. Of course, our greatest debt of gratitude is owed our contributors for their careful and thoughtful responses to our many questions and comments. Thank you. It is our hope that the patterns and behaviors analyzed here from the ancient historian's perspective offer many points of departure for future conversation, both in the classroom and beyond.

Timothy Howe
June, 2015

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of journals and works employed in this book are those from *L'Année Philologique* and the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*[4], and in chapters 2 and 3 *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (CAD), in addition to the following:

AbB	*Altbabylonische Briefe und Beiheft*
ABC	A. K. Grayson (1975) *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*. Texts from Cuneiform Sources 5. Locust Valley.
AEAD	S. Parpola (ed.) (2007) *Assyrian-English-Assyrian Dictionary*. Helsinki.
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (1956–2010). Chicago.
ETCSL	Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature. www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk.
FM 3–24	U.S. Army. *FM 3–24/MCWP 3–33.5. Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies* (2006 and 2014).
GAI	U.S. Government *Guide to Analysis of Insurgency* (2009) and (2012). Retrieved from https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=713599.
ISK	A. Fuchs (1993) *Die Inschriften Sargons II. aus Khorsabad.* Göttingen.
PNAE	*Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (1998–). Helsinki.
RHIC	P. B. Rich and I. Duyvesteyn (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency* (2012). New York.
RHTR	A. Schmid (ed.) *Routledge Handbook on Terrorism Research* (2011). New York.
RIMA	*The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods* (1987–). Toronto.
RIME	*The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods* (1990–). Toronto.
SAA	*State Archives of Assyria* (1987–). Helsinki. Online at http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saao
SAAB	*State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* (1987–). Padova.
SAAS	*State Archives of Assyria Studies* (1992–). Helsinki.

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PART 1

Introduction

CHAPTER 1

Insurgency and Terrorism in the Ancient World, Grounding the Discussion

Lee L. Brice

Insurgency and terrorism are present in the world. We can accept that as fact. Given the level of attention to them in media and policy an observer might be forgiven for thinking insurgency and terrorism are entirely new developments. Based on the importance of insurgency and terrorism in the fields of international studies, political science, social science, security studies, and contemporary history, institutions of all types currently spend vast sums annually on research and analysis devoted to better understanding, combating, and predicting the emergence and impact of these two aspects of military conflict. In addition to the professional works there has been a flood of popular literature on these topics to meet the demands of authors and audiences. The seeming ubiquity in media of these phenomena is a modern development and is not surprising.[1] While the heightened attention to these aspects of conflict is undeniably recent, the types of activities included in our terms *insurgency* and *terrorism* have been around for centuries.

This wave of current interest has done much to help us begin to understand insurgency and terrorism in modern contexts, but most of the research has been focused on specific recent events.[2] As a result of such a blinkered approach, modern insurgent and terrorist studies often risk missing the broader contexts of these historically relevant phenomena. As aspects of warfare and conflict they have deep roots in the past and so are a necessary component of military and political history. Indeed, terror and insurgency are vitally important contextually because they appear so frequently in the historical

1 On media and insurgency and terrorism, see especially Metz (2007) 38–41; Hoffman (2006) 173–228; Law (2015b) 428–41. The bibliography on insurgency and terrorism is enormous and grows daily. Because the modern bibliography and historiography are so immense this chapter will focus primarily on literature of all types published in English, which has become a common language for security studies specialists world-wide.

2 Jackson, Murphy, and Gunning (2009) 219–20; Law (2015a) 6–7.

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record.[3] When we consider how long they have been around, we realize that insurgencies, terrorism, and responses to them have had a huge human impact.[4] Therefore, the benefits of understanding early manifestations of insurgency and terrorism are not limited to institutional, political, and military history, but also must extend to social and cultural history.

In addition to considering the broad historical context, there are also the opportunities presented by introducing tools and methods from the fields of insurgency and terrorism studies into ancient historical studies. Students and the general public often think of ancient history as static and unchanging because it is ancient. Such an evaluation is common but flawed as our knowledge of the ancient world grows and evolves all the time, as a result of new evidence, methodologies, approaches, and questions. Some authors remain resistant to new methodologies, perceiving them as anachronistic, superficial ornamentation, or the creation of categories for the sake of categories (or all three). As Beverly Gage has noted in her recent historical assessment of terrorism studies, the field is dominated by social and political sciences, security studies specialists and members of the military—historians are largely absent.[5] The failure to acknowledge insurgency and terrorism studies has cut historians of the ancient past off from contributing to current topical debates and deprived them of multi-disciplinary analytical tools. Used with care and appreciation for their limits these approaches can augment our understanding of the past by illuminating underappreciated or unseen topics. Exposing ancient and modern specialists to the ways in which insurgency and terrorism emerged in antiquity and the tools available for their study provides an opportunity to ground the field for future research.

This volume seeks to challenge prevailing conceptions of insurgency and terrorism by offering readers an historical perspective on these topics in the ancient Mediterranean world. In doing so, this volume provides a way of thinking about conflict in the ancient past, demonstrates the usefulness of insurgency and terrorism as concepts and as fields for analyzing ancient Mediterranean behavior, and points the way toward future research. We achieve these goals by

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3 In the twentieth century, for example, wars against insurgent movements became the numerically dominant type of military conflict, a pattern that shows signs of repetition in the twenty-first century.

4 Broader historical considerations of these topics include Laqueur (2001); Hoffman (2006); O'Neill (2009); and Boot (2013).

5 Gage (2011) 79–81; cf. Law (2015a) 6–7.

providing an introduction to these fields and a consideration of the vocabulary and concepts they rely upon for analysis. These concepts are then tested in a variety of case studies that reveal the strengths and the limitations inherent in applying these tools to the ancient past. These case studies were chosen both because the events appeared initially amenable to analysis in terms of insurgency or terrorism and because they were spread out across time and place. In this way the collection provides a methodological foundation and point of departure for future scholarly research and conversation.

Some Background

Insurgency and terrorism have been of inconsistent interest to academics and security studies specialists since the post-colonial wars following World War II, even though both aspects of conflict have been around far longer. The insurgencies that emerged during post-colonial conflicts of course drove much of the attention in Europe by academics and military officers, especially among English and French specialists. Interest in insurgency picked up in America in the wake of the Vietnam War, as analysts and scholars reexamined the French and American responses to enemy tactics. In the following decades, despite conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, Central America, and Central Asia the pace of insurgency studies does not seem to have risen greatly, as if it had ceased to be a problem for which western armies needed to prepare.[6]

More recently as the United States and its allies engaged in warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq post-2001, interest in the topic of insurgency has grown exponentially, giving rise to not only renewed fascination with old standards of the field, but also generating an immense output of new work.[7] This attention has been stimulated and agitated by the ongoing vigorous debate in security studies and American military leadership over the corollary topic—counterinsurgency—especially as undertaken in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. The high stakes (e.g., strategy, procurement, casualties, reputation) in current defense policy decisions, have stimulated much more analysis and

6 This volume is not the place to review the full "historiography" of modern work on insurgency and terrorism, for which, Bürgin (2011); Beckett (2012). Most of the work in insurgency studies is by non-historians so the word historiography is applied loosely in this context.

7 Beckett (2012); Porch (2013). Additional discussion of recent historiographical issues in insurgency, Metz (2012) 32–4; Ucko (2012); Gventer (2014).

publication than might usually have been undertaken, but not greater consensus—merely more vigorous debate.[8] Insurgency studies are certainly a growth-field, but one in which there remains a great deal of disagreement.

Terrorism studies followed a slower velocity than insurgency studies for most of the twentieth century, but were on a gradual increase after 1971. This topic also received much greater attention since September 2001 in the wake of a call for a "War on Terror." Most of the scholarly attention has been devoted to revolutionary or political terrorism.[9] Even more than insurgency, terrorism studies have tended to be dominated by narrowly focused work devoted to particular incidents or movements.[10] As a topic of study, terrorism is more fraught than insurgency as there has been widespread confusion in defining it as well as in public perceptions of what underlies it.[11] Regardless of whether the debate has contributed to or stifled work on terrorism, the flood of recent studies devoted to insurgency and terrorism constitutes the appearance of an academic industry.

Because of the intense modern interest, studies of ancient Mediterranean history have begun to feel the pull of contemporary studies in insurgency and terrorism. As a casual visit to any bookseller will reveal, scholars of antiquity are beginning to expend time, energy, and ink trying to understand ancient responses to insurgency and terrorism. Examination of ancient Mediterranean history suggests that just as in the twentieth century, insurgencies may have been common, plaguing various political entities such as the Old Babylonian Empire, Persia, Classical Athens, Alexander the Great's empire, Hellenistic Kingdoms, and Rome. Likewise, for as long as there has been military conflict, terror served as a tool for influencing and intimidating opponents, a fact recognized by ancient authors. In the words the second century Roman author Tacitus placed in the mouth of a chief resisting Rome, "they create a desolation and call it peace," (Tac. *Agric*. 30). While the fourth century orator Themistius wrote, "That which divides the Scythians from the Romans is not a river, nor a lake, nor a wall—as these may be opened, traversed or crossed—but fear, that no one who has ever felt weaker may overcome," (Themist. *Or.* 10.138 D). The

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8 The debate has been vigorous, see *FM 3–24* (2006); (2014); Kilcullen (2010); Porch (2013); Ucko (2012); (2014); Gventer (2014); Gventer, Jones, and Smith (2014). It is certainly no accident that both sides have been primarily from within the security studies field and military.

9 On terrorism see O'Neill (2005); Boehmer and Morton (2009); Silke (2009); Jackson, Smyth, and Gunning (2009a); Duncan and Schmid (2011); Gage (2011); Law (2015a).

10 Jackson, Smyth, and Gunning (2009a) 219–20.

11 Schmid (2011); Gage (2011). I will return to this topic below.

Neo-Assyrian Empire and Rome are often cited for their use of terror against enemies. We should not be surprised, therefore, that scholars are placing insurgency and terrorism in the ancient world.

In many ways the flow of studies on terrorism and insurgency in the ancient past has lagged behind work in modern conflict studies. When studies of insurgency as a particular kind of movement or tactic emerged and grew post-1945, scholars of the ancient world generally ignored the field, a trend that continued until the end of the twentieth century.[12] The topic of terrorism received even less interest from ancient historians and classicists during this same modern period, with the Jewish *Sicarii* receiving the bulk of serious treatment as using political terrorism tactics.[13] Several historians commented on state use of terror and terrorism, but this trend too was extremely limited.[14] The reasons for this pattern of avoidance are not difficult to locate in the potential for anachronistic and moralistic applications, a point to which I will return below. This disdain diminished somewhat with the events of September 2001 as calls for more study went out and opportunities to explore these topics opened up. The same contemporary issues that have driven the broader increase in insurgency studies heavily influenced scholars and popular authors writing on the ancient world, leading to a sudden growth of works devoted to insurgency and terrorism.[15]

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12 Twentieth century and earlier works on ancient conflict that use the term insurgency are uncommon; Pekáry (1987). Some works, like Isaac (1993), use the term insurgent in a limited way to refer to rebels, but do not usually use the word insurgency. The Jewish Wars are sometimes treated similarly to modern insurgencies, but without usually using the word insurgency. The exception to avoiding the word insurgency is work on Bactrian and Sogdian resistance to Alexander of Macedon, which calls the resistance an insurgency, but without actually employing modern concepts of insurgency; on which, see Howe in chapter seven of this volume.

13 Twentieth century works on political or revolutionary terrorism in the ancient world are even less numerous than those on insurgency, although authors will sometimes use the word terrorism to describe extraordinary violence, Isaac (1993). The *Sicarii* have been called terrorists in the modern senses of the word, Smith (1971); Horsley (1979); Taylor and Gautron (2015) 42, conclude that the label is anachronistic. The historiography on the *Sicarii* can be found in Rappaport (2012); Taylor and Gautron (2015) 28–33, 42.

14 Wheeler (1991); (1993); Isaac (1993); Mattern (1999) 22, 115–6, n. 158–9 with citations of earlier work.

15 Works focused on ancient insurgency in full or in part since 2001 include Smith (2007); Mattern (2010); Richardson (2010); Boot (2013); the articles in volume 44.1 (2013) of *Ancient World* (see bibliography). Works on ancient terrorism since 2001 include Urso (2006); Bolich (2006); Mayor (2010); Ñaco del Hoyo et al. (2011). More works in both topics

This "surge" of interest is important, but the resulting work has not been of consistent quality and treatment. The increase in public interest and publicizing of these topics has led to some works that appear more interested in capitalizing on the market than increasing our understanding of the ancient world and these phenomena.[16] The immensity of the fields and the ways in which concepts and definitions and their usage evolve in practice has also meant some works have missed opportunities to achieve more consistent and well-grounded results.[17] Ancient historians wishing to employ and capitalize effectively on insurgency or terrorism studies need to engage with the definitions and vocabulary employed in these fields.

Defining the Problem

A ginormous deterrent for most ancient historians considering use of the modern terms *insurgency* and *terrorism* to treat events in the ancient past is potential anachronism. These concerns are understandable. However, terms can provide clarity and the opportunity to draw upon new approaches if they are used cautiously and appropriately. A secondary problem with these concepts is that their meaning is not static—they have evolved with history, use, and within fields of study. The jargon may provide avenues for analysis, but is also important because the vocabulary has often guided the research instead of the other way around, so it is difficult to make sense of the fields without understanding these two key words.[18] It is, therefore, necessary to spend some time clarifying their meaning and appropriateness for analysis of the ancient past.

Insurgency

Of the two concepts, *insurgency* should be the less tangled since it has a long history dating back to Augustan period Latin. The *OED* attests the earliest use

are apparently in various stages of production. Interest in state terrorism as a topic has not increased among ancient historians since 2001.

16 E.g., Bolich (2006) who compares as equivalent the crime of piracy in the Roman Empire and the September 11, 2001 hijacking, demonstrates both an incomplete understanding of how analysts and scholars define modern terrorism and an insensitivity to historical differences. Cf. Hanson (2010).

17 See volume 44 number 1 (2013) of *Ancient World*, especially Powers (2013).

18 Jackson, Murphy, and Gunning (2009b) 217–21; Gage (2011) 84.

of *insurgency* to the nineteenth century but this usage is based on the much older word "insurgent," which comes from the Latin root, *insurgere*, meaning, among other thing, to rise up, or be rebellious. Christopher Geggie has traced the word's long path from the ancient world to the modern in a recent article, demonstrating thoroughly that its pedigree is long and its meaning as rebellion is a consistent thread.[19] That would seem to satisfy concerns of anachronism, but this ancient etymological origin is not the final word. It is still necessary to make sure it has not acquired modern meanings different from the ancient root.

Over time through usage both general and specialized, *insurgency* has picked up additional meanings, but these are well established and can be located in military and scholarly literature.[20] As already noted, a commonly recognized definition of insurgency is a revolt or rebellious movement against a state. This form appears in most dictionaries and it accounts for common use of *insurgency* as a synonym for armed rebellion. *Insurgency* in this synonym form appeared in nineteenth century historical works focused on Alexander the Great in Bactria.[21] The use of the term in that context was connected with its appearance in contemporary military studies devoted to learning from colonial wars, so-called "small" or guerrilla wars.[22] Authors outside the military seem to have continued using *insurgency* as a synonym for rebellion in general.

During the colonial and post-colonial conflicts of the twentieth century, however, the word *insurgency* took on more specific meanings in military studies as it came to be applied exclusively to irregular or guerrilla warfare and asymmetric tactics, but only in conflicts with a pronounced political aim.[23] This military and security definition of *insurgency* seems to have been more specific than the general understanding of the term until the post-colonial conflicts heated up in the 1960s. By 1971 specialists in the field and even common dictionaries were defining insurgency as an armed rebellion against a constituted government, where the rebels are not recognized as belligerents.[24] The 1971 definition still appears today in many popular dictionaries, but it was only a small leap from that to the definition that appeared in 2006 in both *Webster's New World Dictionary* and the US Army's insurgency field manual, "a revolt or

19 Geggie (2013).

20 Contrary to Gatzke (2013) 66–7, the definition of insurgency is not elusive.

21 Howe, chapter seven in this volume.

22 Beckett (2012) 23; Porch (2013) 3–38.

23 Beckett (2012) 23–4.

24 *OED* (1971), s.v., "insurgency" and "insurgent".

rebellious movement intended to overturn or eliminate a constituted government or authority by subversion and military force."[25] The addition of language recognizing military force and subversion was necessary to make a distinction between passive resistance that may last indefinitely and active movements employing direct action to achieve their end. This definition is also understood by scholars to exclude recognized belligerents involved in a conflict such as the Hellenic and Delian Leagues against Persia in the Persian wars or Mithridates against Rome in the first century BCE. This definition is still relatively close to the 1971 definition that persists in many common dictionaries.

The 2006 definition too was not static, however. The western militaries' concept has evolved to, "The organized use of subversion and violence to seize, nullify, or challenge political control of a region."[26] The differences in the new definition are noticeable, no doubt a reflection of the evolving needs, realities of recent conflicts, or policy debates and is based on recent practice. Whereas the 2006 definition seems to have been close to the popular understanding of *insurgency*, the 2014 definition diverged. The evolution in definitions becomes further complicated when one considers that other western organizations employed different definitions. While both US and NATO militaries had their conceptions, the US Central Intelligence Agency, for example, produced several editions of their own *Guide to Analysis of Insurgency*. The 2012 edition of which included, "Insurgency is a protracted political-military struggle directed toward subverting or displacing the legitimacy of a constituted government or occupying power and completely or partially controlling the resources of a territory through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations."[27] This definition is distinctly different from the popular understanding of *insurgency* as well as the then contemporary military definition, but certainly reflects the needs of the institution employing it. No doubt the assigned use and meanings will keep changing, as such terms are likely to do in an environment of conflict, pressure, and contentious policy activity.

Scholars in insurgency studies have further refined conceptions of insurgency by identifying several varieties that insurgencies may take. Steve Metz

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25 *Webster's New World Dictionary* (2006) s.v., "Insurgency"; *FM 3–24* (2006) Glossary-3. The definition in the US Army field manual also appears in NATO and related western military publications of the period.

26 *FM 3–24* (2014).

27 *GAI* (2012) 1. The previous edition, *GAI* (2009) 2, had defined insurgency as, "Insurgency is a protracted political-military activity directed toward completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations."

and Raymond Millen have suggested that all insurgencies should be seen as fitting into one of two categories—national and liberation. What they call national insurgencies occur where "the primary antagonists are the insurgents and a national government which has at least some degree of legitimacy and support." Liberation insurgencies are those in which there is resistance to "a ruling group that is seen as outside occupiers (even though they might not actually be)."[28] These two labels look initially reasonable, but under scrutiny insurgencies often turn out sufficiently complex and contingent that it is difficult to generalize about them in this way. As a result, these labels do not seem to be employed consistently or commonly in recent literature.[29]

A third category is the network-centric insurgency suggested by William Reno. This type of insurgency occurs where bureaucracy is weak and political power is maintained through patronage networks and control of resources. In this kind of political environment multiple insurgent leaders may emerge (with their own patronage networks) in competition with each other and the dominant government for access to resources and thus, power. In Reno's analysis of modern Africa these insurgencies tend to be commercially motivated as much or more than politically.[30] This way of trying to explain some kinds of insurgencies offers opportunities for application in several ancient historical contexts where bureaucracy was limited and patronage was an important element in maintaining power in some states. Other categories of insurgency tend to be too reliant on modern institutions or other anachronistic factors and so will not be considered in this volume.[31]

It is clear that as conflict and the study of it has changed the use of insurgency has evolved over time and there are multiple definitions active at any point depending on what kind of literature one is investigating. In order to ensure some consistency among the chapters we asked the authors to start from the definition that emerged in 2006, an insurgency is "*a revolt or rebellious*

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28 Metz and Millen (2004) 2.

29 Attempts to use these categories in analyzing ancient events, see Gatzke (2013); Howe (2013).

30 Reno (2012) 161–4; Staniland (2012). See also Johstono, chapter eight and Turner, chapter eleven in this volume.

31 Common problems for applying most recent insurgency studies models in the ancient past are (1) the lack of sufficient sources (data) to permit deep analysis of most aspects and participants, as in McCormick and Giordano (2007), and (2) assumptions based on modern gunpowder warfare which requires resource allocation for purchasing weapons and explosives. Also, some modern analysis is (inevitably) heavily influenced by the culturally-specific ideology of various twentieth century insurgencies (especially Maoist), a dialogue to which ancients did not have access and would largely not have recognized.

movement intended to overturn or eliminate a constituted government or authority by subversion and military force." This definition is not without its problems, but it was judged to be contemporary, least anachronistic, more specific than "armed rebellion" or "irregular warfare" and flexible. We asked our contributors to employ, modify, or reject that definition as their ancient context required so long as they provided a suitable alternative and explained it thoroughly. This definition turned out to function well in most applications, only occasionally requiring some tweaking with Reno's model. The results show how using the modern concept of insurgency in ancient contexts can be useful for illuminating various aspects of the interplay between conflicts and cultures in the ancient world.

Terrorism

If insurgency looks like a complicated term to unravel, *terrorism* is even more so. A large part of the problem for ancient historians is in finding ways to define and delineate terrorism that will not be entirely anachronistic. Terror is often a part of warfare, but just as not every revolt is an insurgency, not every example of terror in wartime is terrorism. As one recent book on terrorism studies observed, "it is something of a cliché to note that there is no accepted definition for the field's primary organising concept, 'terrorism', and that there are literally hundreds of different definitions currently in use."[32] Recent attempts by numerous security analysts to define *terrorism* in a comprehensive manner have proved Sisyphean. The modern sticking point is the necessity of finding a definition that (1) meets the needs of international legal bodies, (2) is sufficiently tight to eliminate loopholes without being vague, and (3) able to contend with the numerous different reasons modern terrorists employ violence. As a result, most authorities agree modern terrorism cannot be defined in absolute terms.[33]

But the debate over absolute legal definitions needs not mean we must quit the search; such a conclusion would be premature. Even the disclaimer above has become something of a cliché since, as Gage has noted, there are widely agreed upon characteristics of terrorism upon which we can work toward identifying a definition.[34] The best formulation of these characteristics as

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32 Jackson, Smyth, and Gunning (2009) 217.

33 The most recent treatment of the definition dilemma required sixty pages of text and more than one hundred pages of appendix, but still failed to establish a widely accepted definition; Schmid (2011) 33–98, and *RHTR* appendix 2.1. For the historiography of the definition hunt see Stohl and Lopez (1984) 5–7; Law (2015a) 4–7.

34 Gage (2011) 74; Kaplan (2011) 101–2.

manifested in modern terrorism comes from Alex Schmid's revised consensus definition,

> Terrorism refers on the one hand to a **doctrine** about the presumed effectiveness of a special form or tactic of fear generating, coercive political violence and … a conspiratorial **practice** of calculated, demonstrative, direct violent action without legal or moral restraints, targeting mainly civilians and non-combatants, performed for its propagandistic and psychological effects on various audiences and conflict parties (emphasis original).[35]

This recent formulation is thoroughly focused on modern terrorism and on non-state level actors, but it provides a starting point from which we can work in trying to formulate a definition that would be applicable in the ancient world.

Although there was no perfect ancient equivalent for the modern word *terrorism*, it does not mean that there was no terror and terrorism. Terror has been present in every war, and in all lesser conflicts including those in the ancient world. But not all terror is terrorism, a point to which I will return below. Rather, terrorism of the twenty-first century variety (e.g., revolutionary terrorism) would have been extremely difficult. Before the advent of gunpowder, a non-state entity seeking to perpetrate terrorism would do so with difficulty in an age when every individual victim had to be killed by hand-held weapons and the velocity of communication, a key component of terrorism, traveled at the speed of the fastest boat or horse, or more often by foot. Disseminating information quickly and broadly about the terrorist act, so critical in modern terrorism, was difficult for the ancient world. This difficulty could be reduced in densely populated urban areas (like first century Rome or Jerusalem) with a high degree of cultural unity. Another difficulty for the ancient world is that while most modern conceptions explicitly state that civilians are the victims, it is difficult in the ancient world to draw bright-line distinctions between civilians and non-civilians since most militaries were not fully professionalized and males of all ages past adolescence could be called upon (were expected) to defend the community.[36] If we rely on twenty-first century definitions, then terrorism of any kind was uncommon or at least seldom recorded in the

35 Schmid (2011) 86–7; As Law points out (2015a) 7, Schmid follows the definition with twelve explanatory points.

36 A more appropriate distinction to draw is combatants and non-combatants, where non-combatants typically included women, children, the infirm, and the extremely elderly.

ancient world. Does that seem correct, that there was no terrorism of any kind? Consequently, there is no compelling reason to employ twenty-first century language when previous conceptions might prove more relevant.

Use of the word *terrorism* may trace its roots to the French revolution, but coherent definitions did not emerge until the early twentieth century. As noted previously, in the mid-twentieth century there was intense interest in terrorism as a result of the numerous post-colonial insurgencies occurring after World War II. Analysts of insurgent movements recognized a need to define terrorism in more concrete, social-psychological terms. By 1964, Thomas Thornton had formulated a definition that gained acceptance in international literature, "terror is a symbolic act designed to influence political behavior by extra-normal means, entailing the use or threat of violence."[37] Researchers working in the following fifteen years refined the definition somewhat,[38] but made little meaningful adjustment before the 1980s when the work of Schmid and others took defining terrorism in the direction presented previously.

As twentieth-century specialists sought to define *terrorism* they recognized the presence of different categories of it. While uses of *terrorism* in historical conflicts necessarily conform to one of the definitions already provided and thus share certain qualities, it is useful to recognize that not all terrorism is employed for the same larger purpose and may, therefore, be distinguished into several types.[39] The two types relevant for the ancient Mediterranean are "revolutionary terrorism" and "state terrorism." Revolutionary terrorism is the use of terror as an insurgent strategy with the goal of overthrowing the state, and so is sometimes called anti-state terrorism.[40] This form, to which Thornton's definition above referred, was the most numerically common in the twentieth century and is what readers often think of when they consider terrorism. Despite its modern dominance, however, revolutionary terrorism was the less common form of terrorism in the ancient world, because the nature of killing by hand made it difficult for sub-state or non-state, revolutionary entities to use effectively such a strategy.

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37 Thornton (1964) 73. The reference to "design" means it was purposeful, "symbolic act" refers to its role as communication, while "by extra-normal means" refers to the level and kind of act by which violence is employed.

38 Price (1977) 53, "It is planned violence intended to have psychological influence on politically relevant behavior." See also Hutchinson (1971) 393–5; Law (2015a) 5–7.

39 McAllister and Schmid (2011).

40 Revolutionary terrorism was treated by numerous authors under many labels before Thomas Thornton defined it in concrete terms, (1964) 72–3; but Martha Hutchinson's more detailed treatment (1971) 394–5 remains a better formulated discussion. Cf. Price (1977) esp. 53–5.

Revolutionary terrorism existed in the ancient world (e.g., *Sicarii*), but in terms of victims and effect it was less common than what we might call state terror, what Thomas Thornton originally called "enforcement terror." Thornton defined enforcement terror as "the use of terror by an incumbent government that wishes to suppress a challenge to their authority."[41] Thornton's seminal paper stimulated much analysis that led researchers to eventually rename it "governmental terror" and finally, "state terrorism." The name changed but the meaning is still the same.

The field of terrorism studies has not been consistently open to state terrorism as a legitimate category of inquiry,[42] but this opposition has declined in the face of vigorous challenges so that there is now a subfield of state terrorism studies.[43] Discontent with the limitations of Thornton's definition and increased attention to state terrorism led various scholars to suggest improvements until Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting suggested in 2010 defining it as, "state terrorism [is] the intentional use or threat of violence by state agents or their proxies against individuals or groups who are victimized for the purpose of intimidating or frightening a broader audience."[44] An advantage of this definition is that it takes into account the earlier observation that state terrorism can be either direct, in the form of official military terror and intimidation against enemies or indirect, in the form of associated groups inflicting terror for the purpose of intimidation on the constituted political entity's behalf.[45] In the ancient Mediterranean, direct state terrorism was most common, employed by many imperial powers or would-be imperial powers.[46] This definition is the most successful in covering the parameters of state terrorism

41 Thornton (1964) 72.

42 Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 3–8; Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 3–5; Gage (2011) 78–9; Schmid (2011b) 68–9.

43 Stohl and Lopez (1984a); Claridge (1996); Stohl (2006); Jackson, Murphy, and Gunning (2009); Blakeley (2010); Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010); McAllister and Schmid (2011) 203–11; Law (2015b).

44 Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 3. Cf., Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 7; Blakeley (2009); Toros and Gunning (2009); Jackson, Murphy, and Gunning (2009). For a more extended discussion of this issue see Millender, chapter five in this volume.

45 Stohl and Lopez (1984a). Cf. Lopez (1984); Stohl (2006) esp. 2, 6–8; Claridge (1996); Blakeley (2010).

46 Neo-Assyria, Neo-Babylonia, Persia and Rome may be the most obvious examples, but fifth-century Athens, Alexander the Great, the Diadochi and Mithridates are also among the numerous ancient states that employed terrorism as a strategy to enforce authority. See Wheeler (1991).

across historical contexts without being rigidly modern and so we adopted it for purposes of this volume.

Since state terrorism was more common than revolutionary terrorism in the ancient world, it is this variety with which we are primarily concerned here. As with insurgency, the need for consistency required we choose a definition so we asked authors to start with the 2010 definition, "*state terrorism* [*is*] *the intentional use or threat of violence by state agents or their proxies against individuals or groups who are victimized for the purpose of intimidating or frightening a broader audience.*" This definition has a good mix of criteria and flexibility to permit its application in various places and periods without overt anachronism. Authors wishing to do so were welcome also to draw upon Thornton's definition of revolutionary terrorism, "terror is a symbolic act designed to influence political behavior by extra-normal means, entailing the use or threat of violence."[47]

Some scholars of the ancient world will still object, no matter the definition, to using such modern words as *state* and *terrorism*. These concerns are reasonable and deserve to be addressed some more. The word *state*, some will argue, implies a political organization or cohesiveness that may not exist so early in history. Moreover, some readers may feel that the distinctions between public and private violence are insufficiently established in the ancient world to use a term like *state terrorism*. In any case, some readers may point out that ancient states bear little resemblance to the kind of modern state that most discussions of state terrorism have examined. We reject the label of pre-state or proto-state applied to any of the case studies here covering post bronze-age political entities. There is no denying Seth Richardson's point that early Mesopotamia was in an early stage of state development, but Assyria, Persia, Sparta, Athens, Macedon, and Rome were sufficiently developed institutionally and politically to be fully fledged states even if they had not experienced the glories of post-Enlightenment political theory. The objection over the lack of distinction between private and public violence is a red herring in ancient contexts where states might rely regularly on private power in local communities as a means of projecting public order and control.[48] As to the objection that ancient states are not what studies have focused on, that is a large part of the point of this book. I noted previously that studies of terrorism have focused on modern history to the nearly complete exclusion of the ancient world so that of course studies of state terror tend to focus on modern states. That need

47 Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 3; Thornton (1964) 72. Schmid's definition, (2011) 86–7, presented previously, is too anachronistic for application to the ancient world.

48 On the blending of public and private violence see Mattern (2010).

not mean we cannot apply the concepts of *state* terrorism studies to ancient states and see what emerges.

Terrorism is of course an entirely modern term, first appearing in the late eighteenth century. It is additionally a heavily loaded term carrying a negative or pejorative connotation when applied in most periods. This characterization is true regardless of whether a state or a non-state entity is engaging in terrorism. Richard Jackson has provided perhaps the best observation on this fraught aspect of the word,

> First, we must remain sensitive to the inherent and often serious problems and challenges surrounding the employment of the ontologically unstable term 'terrorism' as a key part of our research agenda. 'Terrorism', whether state or nonstate, is not an objective, empirically identifiable phenomenon in which the terroristic qualities are inherent to the violent act; rather, it is a socially constructed, historicalIy contingent category of human behavior that is dependent upon circumstance, context, and intention. Most often, the term is deployed as a derogatory label against one's enemies. Although the observed regularities in state violence may be analytically and normatively usefully described as 'state terrorism' at the present moment, we must remain sensitive to those circumstances in which the term 'terrorism' is not necessarily helpful or productive and to the possibility that in the future it may have to give way to other, more productive labels and concepts.[49]

As we continue using *terrorism* we need to acknowledge its limitations and remain aware of them but not abandon the word since currently no alternative exists.

A final difficulty with using *state terrorism* in a discussion of conflict is that terror is a natural component of organized violence. Whether it is the terror of the soldiers in battle, or the commander whose reputation is at stake, or the merchants whose livelihood may be ruined, or the non-combatants on both sides, especially the losers, terror is ever-present in armed conflict, especially in war. Not all terror is necessarily terrorism. When, for example, the Romans laid siege to a city, every adult inside the city knew that if they lost, the consequences would be swift and terrible for everyone—death, slavery, rape, and relocation were among the fates that would follow swiftly. The concomitant terror this knowledge created was not the result of state terrorism. It was, as Josh Levithan has argued, an understanding that when a city relied on its walls,

49 Jackson (2010) 238.

closed its gates, and invited siege, the city inhabitants knew it meant a terrifying fate if they lost. Even if word of the losers' fate did not travel, every city knew what would happen if it lost a siege.[50] This was the terror of war, not terrorism.

All of which brings us back to the criticism of terrorism. How do we separate state terrorism from the typical terror of war? We look for the extremes—like when in 15 CE Germanicus attempted to wipe out the tribes he encountered in his invasion of Germania even though his invasion had not been provoked by a Germanic attack that year (it had occurred in 9). We investigate; use the definitions and models provided by insurgency and terrorism studies; and our judgment. Not every suggested instance of state terrorism will stand up to scrutiny, but over time historians will contribute to a better, more complete understanding of state terrorism as it fits into ancient history.

These issues tied to *terrorism* are real and unavoidable in the sense that we cannot avoid some anachronism when we apply such modern terms to antiquity. There are many terms that scholars use to describe institutions, movements, and events in the past that did not exist at that time, including such diverse words as government, gender, race, mutiny, environment, network, etc. They are useful despite their modern origin because they provide clarity and meaning that would otherwise be missing.[51] Some anachronism is unavoidable, but that is not the point of bringing these studies together. Applying these terms, concepts, and approaches to the ancient world is not going to be a perfect fit in all cases, but the goal is to see how the tools drawn from modern insurgency and terrorism studies can be of some use in exploring conflict in the ancient world.

Case Studies

This collection of studies is organized into three parts in order to cover a broad swathe of ancient Mediterranean history from the Ancient Near East to the Late Roman Empire. Although insurgency and terrorism studies tend to be dominated by social scientists, political scientists, and security studies specialists, all of the contributors are ancient historians, giving the work a thoroughly historical approach and flavor. Within each part, the authors took diverse paths in tackling insurgency and terrorism in the ancient world. As mentioned

50 Levithan (2013) 23–46. This pattern of siege and terror was not limited to the Romans, but was common among many cultures of the ancient Mediterranean.

51 Taylor and Gautron (2015) 42; cf. Kaplan (2011).

before, we wanted to ensure some consistency in our project so we asked each author to start with the definitions we had already determined most suitable. Once into writing their chapter they had freedom to diverge as they saw fit and as historical context required. Given the nature of the project—application of modern tools to ancient contexts—some modern works from military and security studies sources were necessary, but because of the potential for anachronism and a desire to avoid getting caught up in contemporary policy debates we endeavored to minimize the number of such publications authors employed, relying instead on primary sources and secondary historical studies as much as possible. Readers will, we expect, be satisfied with the diverse conclusions the authors came to in their application of insurgency and terrorism studies.

The first set of chapters cover the Ancient Near East. Seth Richardson's consideration of insurgency and terrorism in Mesopotamia provides a strong opening for the collection. Drawing on his previous work on rebellion in this period, Richardson offers the reader an historiographical background to the topic of revolt and insurgency in early Mesopotamia before moving on to concepts of terrorism. In the course of his examination he tests the definitions against notions of state power and the realities of rule in this region. He finds these concepts illuminating for what they do and do not tell us about the limited nature of power and administration in these early states. Sarah Melville focuses in her chapter on the Neo-Assyrian Empire in the eighth century. Covering the same region as Richardson, but more than a millennium later she is able to apply her analysis to a more complex state structure and so draws some different conclusions about the responses to insurgency. Melville does not labor the familiar themes of Assyrian use of state terror, preferring instead to focus on how insurgency and counter-insurgency studies illuminate the language of power and communication. The final chapter in this part, by Josef Wiesehöfer, provides a case study from the Achaemenid Persian Empire. He uses the revolt of Sidon in the mid-fourth century to consider Persian administration and our problematic primary sources. Insurgency and terrorism models do prove to be useful in making sense of certain aspects of this event which are otherwise not entirely clear in the sources. It is apparent from Wiesehöfer's discussion that in addition to shedding light on the sources and the network of relationships in the Levant region, the Persian response to revolt demonstrated the Great King's strength.

The Greek world, with its small city-states may not seem to be an ideal target for insurgency and terrorism studies, but some regions turn out to be ripe for analysis. Ellen Millender's examination of Spartan-Helot relations

uses state terror models to consider the secretive *crypteia* and the nature of Spartan domination. Limited evidence has stymied attempts to better understand this institution and the means of control Spartans exercised. By considering the evidence through models of state terrorism she is able to shed light on what may have been going on between the groups. Timothy Howe examines Alexander's campaigns in Bactria and Sogdiana. Drawing primarily from insurgency studies and recent works on Alexander in central Asia he provides the reader with a historiographical chapter in which he analyzes modern treatments of Alexander's reactions to resistance and terrorism. Howe also uses Alexander to contextualize earlier Macedonian approaches to insurgency and shows that terror and fighting insurgents were nothing new to the Argeads, especially Philip II. The result is a distinct approach, but provides a most useful example of how insurgency studies can bring clarity to recent interpretations. Paul Johstono considers terror and insurgency in second century Ptolemaic Egypt. Using the Great Revolt as his case study, he demonstrates that insurgency and counterinsurgency help make sense of the confusing and gap-ridden source record to provide a better sense of the revolt's evolution and the Ptolemaic response. In the process, he shows how modern work on network organization can provide additional means of understanding how the insurgency developed and spread.

The part of the book devoted to Ancient Rome opens with Francisco Marco Simón's consideration of the Spanish wars during the Roman Republic. He finds in these particularly brutal wars a good example of state terrorism in action, drawing particular attention to how the Romans justified their campaigns in light of the perceived savagery of Celtibero and Lusitanian conflicts against the Roman military and against other local groups. In the process Marco Simón also shows how terror was not an abstract policy for Rome, but was a response closely connected to aristocratic competition for status in Rome. Frank Russell situates his discussion of Rome and its enemies in the Levant with a focus on the first century Jewish Wars. Among all the Roman conflicts this one seems most suited to an examination drawing on insurgency-counterinsurgency studies. Russell demonstrates that by examining Roman actions specific to the region we get a better sense of how and why Roman approaches evolved over time as they responded to the insurgency. As their campaign and Jewish resistance ratcheted up in reaction, the Roman response should be seen in light of an evolving counterinsurgency practice that gradually became more brutal. Russell's emphasis is on counterinsurgency as an explanation in preference to state terror. Brian Turner's examination of the Batavian war of the late '60s reveals that perhaps we have simply misunderstood this conflict. He finds that

drawing on the tools of insurgency studies in examining the conflict along the Rhine makes better sense than traditional approaches. It provides the means to actually explain what the sources tell us occurred. Turner draws on Reno's model of inter-node insurgency to explain the emergence of multiple local leaders, each with different, often competing, goals. In the process, he is able to bring a sensible explanation for the movement's evolution and eventual collapse. Grant Couper provides the final consideration of insurgency in Roman contexts with an examination of the Bagaudae movement in the third and fifth centuries. Once considered a local revolt, Couper shows how drawing upon insurgency models and reexamining our scarce sources can fill in some of the gaps in our knowledge and reveal that the Bagaudae were neither an insurgency nor even a coherent political movement.

With this conclusion Couper reminds the reader of Richardson's doubts about insurgency and terrorism in early Mesopotamia, thus providing a second check on the appropriateness of assuming all revolts are insurgencies while also reinforcing the usefulness of insurgency studies and providing a strong bookend for the volume's case studies. Jonathan Roth provides the last word in the volume with his epilogue reconsidering the chapters in this volume and recent work on insurgency and terrorism. His conclusion looks toward the future of such studies.

Concluding Observations

In the course of these case studies several themes emerge. The first and most predictable theme is the usefulness of using insurgency and terrorism studies to augment other approaches to examining conflict in the ancient world. While these approaches, like any fields, have their limitations, they can provide explanatory models and through comparative analysis help fill gaps in how we assemble the narratives our limited sources provide. At the same time using these methodologies does not mean we need see insurgency and terrorism everywhere, as demonstrated by Richardson and Couper. These approaches can contribute to a better appreciation for how and why these types of conflict or movements are often not present.

A second theme that appears in multiple chapters is the connection between insurgency and the label "banditry." Richardson and Melville note that in both their studies they find consistent representations of insurgents (real and potential) as bandits. Johstono found a similar pattern in Ptolemaic Egyptian records, as did Russell in his examination of the Jewish Wars. In

the latter two cases these labels were used not only by the state, but also by subjects. This pattern is not simply a regional usage in the eastern Mediterranean as it also appears in Spain and Gaul. Couper concludes that the word Bagaudae was often associated with bandits and banditry in late antiquity.

The association of the word bandit with insurgency across time and place is interesting for several reasons. Of course it is a means for a state or ruler to use language as a means of denying insurgents any political identity or legitimacy, a pattern noted by each of the chapter authors. "Bandits" do not deserve to be negotiated with and are by their very nature outsiders, unworthy of the people's attention, or at least that was the rhetoric.[52] At the same time, as Mattern has noted, bandits were sometimes insurgents operating locally on behalf of or in opposition to locally powerful individuals, along the lines of Turner's discussion of multi-node insurgency.[53] We should be careful, however, to avoid too broad a brush when we call all criminals and bandits insurgents.[54] Typical banditry in which the participants are working strictly for their own personal gain or economic presence is not a genuine form of insurgency in the ancient world, even though it is a crime. In the words of Johstono, insurgency is "a violent attempt to renegotiate power relationships," which in this volume we are treating as political.[55] And when these bandits terrorize local regions for the same personal reasons they are not terrorists, but merely criminals.[56] The linguistic turn here demonstrates how difficult it is in many cases to distinguish in the primary documents when brigands are basic criminals seeking self-enrichment and when they are political insurgents. This pattern is consistent in all the contexts examined by these authors, and indicates a topic on which much more work needs to be done.

A third and final theme that emerges in these discussions is the restraint often employed by those in power, especially in states, in connection with the potential for employing terror. Early in this chapter there was a reference to Tacitus' and Themistius' statements that Rome relied on terror as part of securing its dominance. What emerges in the examinations of the Ancient Near East was that while terror certainly existed, it often did not rise to the level of state terrorism in early Mesopotamia. Even under the Assyrians it was one of multiple options they exercised in responding to insurgency and rebellion. The same is true in Sparta where Millender shows that the system of controlling

52 Shaw (1984); (1993) 184–9. Much the same can be said of pirates (*RG* 25.1).

53 Mattern (2010); Reno (2012); Turner, chapter eleven in this volume.

54 Mattern (2010) 168–70.

55 Johstono, chapter eight, in this volume.

56 Mattern (2010) 168–9.

helots had undeniably brutal elements, but at the same time the two groups were also interconnected in some important ways (*neodamoidei*) so that terrorism was not possible all the time against all helots. Alexander the Great certainly employed terror in his Indian campaign in 427–426 BCE, but it was not the only means he or his successors employed for responding to subject communities that wanted (or seemed) to renegotiate power relationships. Rome, whose reputation for state terrorism has already been mentioned in connection with Spain and Judaea, often did not exercise that ultimate option as, for example, along the Rhine after the insurgency there in 69–70 CE. While state terrorism certainly existed, it was less common than has perhaps been assumed by casual observers. Each period finds that most states did not treat terror as their preferred response and even when they did employ it, there were various complexities in play in every case. The obvious conclusion from this observation is another topic in need of further investigation.

Early in this chapter I stated that the goals of this project were threefold: provide a way of thinking about conflict in the ancient past, demonstrate the usefulness of insurgency and terrorism as concepts and as fields for analyzing ancient Mediterranean behavior, and point the way toward future research. As these three themes and our case studies demonstrate, this project meets its initial goals and has opened the way toward opportunities for much work in the future. Insurgency and terrorism should not be reserved exclusively for the social/political science field and security specialists; they are topics which need historians' attention, and not only military or political historians, but historians of all fields because their impact is broad.

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PART 2

The Ancient Near East

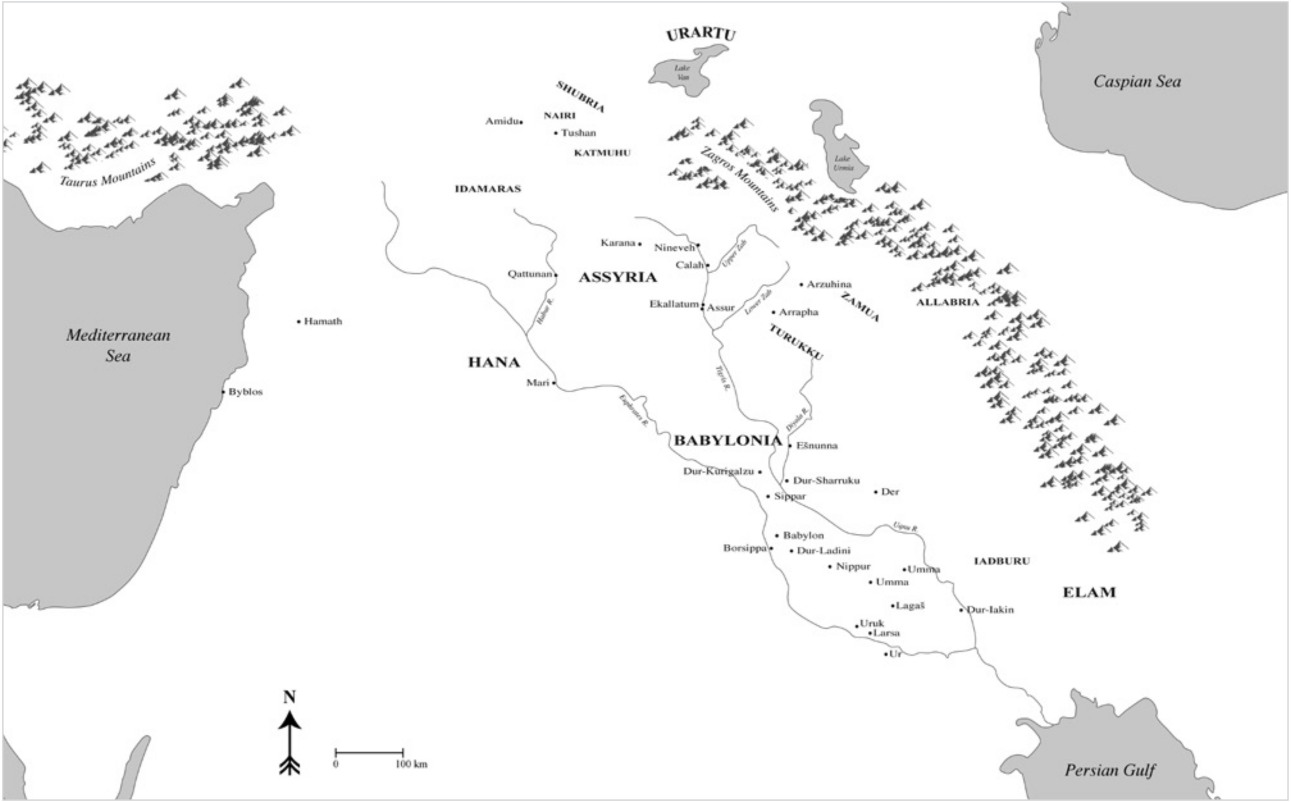


FIGURE 2.1 *The Ancient Near East, highlighting locations in chapters two and three.*

CHAPTER 2

Insurgency and Terror in Mesopotamia

Seth Richardson

The battle-club would not find out your name; it would just find your flesh.
SUMERIAN PROVERB 3.84

Introduction

There are two points I want to make at the start. The first is that there were rebellions aplenty in the annals of Mesopotamian history: this was not an apolitical society. Notwithstanding the routine demurrals of official state accounts, which aimed to void dissent of meaningful content,[1] Mesopotamian rebellions carried forward explicitly political arguments and dialogues. From a common-sense point of view, this finding is unsurprising and needs little elaboration: everywhere states existed, so did their challengers. Even the criteria for insurgency (as a specific *form* of rebellion) finds traction in the evidence, i.e., in states' withholding of recognition for some enemies and the existence of asymmetric warfare tactics. However, the existence of these necessary conditions does not warrant the conclusion that they were sufficient: insurgency was simply not a common form of engagement between or within early Mesopotamian states and their societies. Mesopotamian states did not have the pervasive infrastructural power to force civil societies to push back in the equally comprehensive way that the freighted term "insurgency" wants.

The second point is that, to whatever degree "terror" existed, its origin—as symbol, strategy and weapon—lay squarely in the state, and not its enemies. "State terror" historically preceded its use by the state's Others in the Mesopotamian case, if to an extremely limited degree.[2] It is not so much

1 For theoretical and historical treatments of Mesopotamian rebellion, see Richardson (2010a).
2 "State terror" distinguishes the state's "wholesale" use of terror, through its comprehensive and better-funded military, economic, and civil apparatus, from the more ad-hoc and asystematic "retail" terror of low-budget non-state groups: see e.g. Chomsky 1991; see also chapter one, this volume. The term has its historical origins with Robespierre and the 1793–94 "Reign of Terror," and so it is hardly new, but remains conceptually protean, especially as

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the point that certain types of violence were or were not coded as illegitimate—in the Mesopotamian case, specific forms of violence were not really distinguished as either more or less acceptable—and more the point that fear and terror were valorized, perhaps contrary to our expectations, as authoritative attributes of *legitimacy*. This requires us to re-think whether the Weberian terms of legitimacy can be useful in unpacking a word like "terrorism" in this historical context. It is important that the historically-specific form of Mesopotamian terror be understood on its own terms, especially since its lurid imagery has been easily misunderstood as a precedent for both authoritarianism (as a legacy of ancient "despotism") and modern terrorism.

Before embarking on an examination of insurgency and state terror in the Mesopotamian context, however—and not withstanding the undoubtedly real role they played—I must underscore their low incidence and impact in this early civilization. To mistake the fact of these forms' demonstrable existence for their prevalence would be to further a kind of power fantasy about the extent of early state power. A low-power model for early states and societies has been insufficiently theorized;[3] instead, many studies of the early state have turned to one of the most cherished explanatory tropes of the Humanities and Social Sciences: violence-as-origin.[4] This modern structure error has too often left early Mesopotamian states, though ill-fitted to the clothes, playing the unlikely roles of first empires, first surveillance states, and first autocracies. It has been difficult to argue that this culture engaged in sophisticated military and political practices while also maintaining that its abilities and impacts in these areas were small. As readers go forward in this small essay, I would ask that they bear this near-paradox in mind: that ideas and practices give good evidence of what was conceptually possible, but not always of capacity or normative political practice.

Rebellion was a regular feature of Mesopotamian political life, and so also its preconditions (i.e., motives of greed and grievance[5]), processes (e.g., dissent, dialogue, principles of resistance) and sequelae (e.g., reprisals, revisionist

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to whether or not it should be juridically classed with other forms of terrorism (see e.g., Wood and Gibney [2010] and Sluka et al. [2002]) and is, of course, heavily politicized.

3 See Richardson (forthcoming).

4 The literature seems almost bottomless, but see recently, e.g., Spencer (2010); Flannery and Marcus (2003); Stanish and Levine (2011)—noting the heavy presence of New World archaeology for this topic—and Bowles and Gintis (2011).

5 Richardson (2010b) xxii–xxiv; these are commonly-engaged political-scientific terms.

accounts, mythicization[6]). The presence of rebellion in political life is as old as political speech; Enmetena of Early Bronze Lagaš, one of the first kings to inscribe an account of military conflict, cursed the opposing leader with: "May the people of his own city, after rising up against him, kill him there within his own city!"[7] Middle Bronze sources make plain that some petty kings were concerned that "the commoners" might turn on them.[8] And Iron Age Assyria built its political rhetoric around the dyad of loyalty and rebellion. Thus, even the most fearsome states lived in some countervailing fear of their subjects.

Some rebellions became quite famous in cuneiform cultures, such as those revolts against Naram-Sin of Akkad or Samsuiluna of Babylon. Mesopotamian rebellions could involve regicide (e.g., the successful revolt against Tukulti-Ninurta I of Assyria) or officers' putsches (e.g., the unsuccessful generals' plot against Esarhaddon); even revolts born out of prison riots, mob violence, or whispering campaigns.[9] It is not an exaggeration to say that there were hundreds of rebellions over the three millennia of Mesopotamian political life: in the Old Babylonian period alone (ca. 2000–1600), more than five dozen rebellions (some successful) can be identified through state accounts alone (i.e., through year-names and royal inscriptions) without much effort.[10] In fact, almost all our evidence for rebellions derives from the sanitized accounts of the states which (usually) crushed them, though enough nuanced information remains to permit some reconstructions. From even this we can see that revolts were numerous and diverse enough to defy any comprehensive treatment, far from the identical or unknowable entities they are sometimes assumed to be.

This complexity and range of dissent and rebellion is illustrated by the example of a mid-eighteenth century letter from northern Babylonia (AbB XIII 60). The letter concerns events in the north-western corner of the Babylonian state, along the Euphrates between Babylon and Mari. The time in which it was written followed the consolidating conquests of Hammurabi, when few state rivals to Babylon any longer existed, and thus the letter seems to discuss

6 Most prominently in the stories of the revolt of the lesser Igigi gods against the Anunnaki found in the *Atra-ḫasīs* (see Lambert and Millard [1999]), or the revolt of Tiamat against the gods in *Enuma Eliš* (Talon [2005]).

7 RIME 1 9.5.1 vi 26–29.

8 FM 2 71: "[Ḫabdiya] caused upheaval among the commoners.... They explained that the king was no king, the governor no governor in the city of Qaṭṭunan!" See also ARM 26/2 412, 413.

9 Richardson (2010c) 20–1.

10 For an overview of at least 63 rebellions of the Old Babylonian period alone (ca. 2000–1600), see Richardson (2010c) 18–23. All dates BCE unless indicated otherwise.

a local civil uprising. The rebels described in this letter used to their advantage loyalty oaths, kinship ties, raiding, subversive speech, the infiltration of civil institutions, secret communications networks, and knowledge of the local terrain. They were uncowed by imprisonment or interrogation, and their charismatic leader, named Zimri-ḫammu, seems to have enjoyed some status as a local anti-hero. The letter discusses the attributes of both insurgent warfare and rebellion (i.e., protest and persuasion) as typical features of the political landscape. That the uprising is not reflected anywhere else in the substantially thick corpus of letters and inscriptions of the time suggests that, despite its alarming tone, the event was not wildly unusual.

This brings us closer to our true subject: what, if anything, might differentiate *insurgencies* from rebellions in the Mesopotamian context?[11] An honest attempt to answer such a question would take stock of two key conceptual attributes of insurgencies: the withholding of recognition of belligerent status for rebels by states, a modern international legal definition;[12] and the practice of asymmetric warfare, whether strategic or tactical, as a matter of battlefield practice. So first I will look at what sources we have to address the recognition issue; then take stock of the larger and more diverse evidence for insurgency and asymmetric warfare; and finally I will return to the issue of an original and enduring "state terror."

Rebellion and Recognition

The recognition of belligerent status is a tricky matter among combatants of any time or place, but especially hard to discern between ancient states and rebels. The concession by states that enemies had an essential parity as humans and combatants, if not as equal or legitimate members of bodies politic, has become a crucial concept in studies of warfare in the modern world. That rebel causes are illegitimate is a near-universal, of course—no state likes rebels—and the absence of Mesopotamian frameworks of laws of war or human rights makes it difficult to identify legitimacy in the ancient record, and impossible

11 See Altman (2013) 56: "As far as I am aware, there seems to be no distinction in the available documentation between a real war and a mere raid." Cf. M. L. R. Smith (2003) 19, who argues of modernity that "terms like 'guerrilla warfare' and 'low intensity warfare' . . . do not exist as proper categories of war."

12 The protocol derives from the Hague Convention of 1899 which enumerated the legal privileges of combatants recognized as "belligerents."

to discuss in the same terms.[13] Neither belligerent status (or its deprivation), unsurprisingly, was legally indicated in cuneiform antiquity.

But the elevation of delegitimizing language within state rhetoric was symptomatic of the question. The degree to which states invested effort in the rhetorical disapprobation of rebels *did* vary significantly from time to time and place to place. This much hints that it was useful for states to code some rebellions and rebel leaders as utterly devoid of principle, or even inhuman, and rebels as undeserving of life,[14] while tacitly acknowledging the objections of other rebellions and rebels, however misguided they might be.

How were Mesopotamian rebels described?[15] The very act of description already obligated authorities to admit some political content: even in delegitimizing the "noise" (*rigmu*) of rebellion, for instance, they *de facto* acknowledged the existence of dissenting speech. Likewise, metaphors of rebellion as disordered movement betray the reality of political assembly (rebellion as, e.g., a "mixing up" [*samāḫu*] or a "banding together" [*katāru*]).[16] Rebels were dismissed as unruly children to be "quieted" (>*nâḫu*) or disobedient animals to be "yoked" (*ṣamādu*), but the rhetorical reciprocals imply that these analogies answered rebel charges that the king's roles as legitimate father and shepherd were being contested. And characterizations of rebels as the violators of contracts (*mitgurtu, rikistu*) necessarily implied that some bilateral obligations were incumbent on the state through the framework of the social contract. These frames reflected a politics, and some recognition of rebellion within it.

13 Indeed, it is a very large-scale problem to define basic social or political recognition in Mesopotamian culture, much less than in the adversarial sense discussed here. The status of others in general was poorly distinguished terminologically: in the Old Babylonian period, for instance, letters and royal inscriptions spoke plentifully of "enemies," LÚ.KÚR entirely unnamed. It has been argued by some that this generic nomenclature reflects the language of omens, and that the term was meant to cast any military opponents in an absolute status opposite the moral order of the state. While that rhetorical strategy was sometimes undoubtedly in play, this period also produced a record of conflicts between states and groups whom the former were genuinely at pains to identify, principally because they were ethnically heterogeneous, with political orders not built on kingship. See, e.g., "the enemy" as it appears in various Old Babylonian letters: AbB IX 140, 160; XI 61, 127; XIV 8, 53, 81, 114, 204.

14 Cf. Good (1967), on capital punishment for criminality.

15 The following terminological overview digests the discussion of Richardson (2010c) 1–12; compare with Geggie (2013), on *regere* and *insurgere*.

16 Brice, this volume, also points out the semantic connection between insurgency's putative disorganization and its illegitimacy.

But other metaphorical ranges set rebels well beyond the pale of acceptable error and recognition. Language used to paint rebels as criminals, for instance, associated their acts with assault and battery, or "oppression" (*ḫibiltu*). Beyond this ethical tone lay a moral one, in which rebellion became sin and perversion, with rebels as "wicked wrongdoers" (*bēl arni*) and "anarchists" (>*tēšû*). Enemy rulers were mocked as non-kings[17] and a rogue's gallery of other terms were lexically unique in Akkadian, categorically isolating rebels and rebellion from semantic structures of political discourse. Accusations of disloyalty, treachery, distrust and unsubmissiveness, unlike the contract motif, carried connotations of unconditional and unilateral subjectivity, lying well outside of legal-rational conceptual structures. In such cases, one might argue that rebellions were altogether outside of political recognition.

Through the lens of the language meant to discredit challenges to the state, one thus evinces the arguments which Mesopotamian rebellions carried forward, if only on the premise that the state's language of disapprobation holds a mirror up to itself in responding to particular objections to failures of rule—legal objections for the state contract, social objections for the family compact, moral objections for the divine commission of rule. Across the millennia, the largest rhetorical shift was that an earlier reliance on paternal and pastoral metaphors in the Early and Middle Bronze Ages gave way by the Iron Age to a preference to style rebellion in the legal terms of the broken contract and the moral ones of crime and sin. This surely was a consequence of the historical change in political landscape, from the local palatial kingdoms of the third and second millennia to the imperial states of the first; from king as custodian and *pater familias* to the sacred body of the emperor; from subjects as misguided children to sinners in abject error.

This is not to say that dehumanizing language was entirely new in the first millennium. The earliest form of legal recognition might be identified in treaty oaths of the twenty-fifth century (e.g., RIME 2 1.4.7) the violation of which would incur curses and divine wrath, beyond the bounds of human justice.[18] The execution and corpse abuse of enemies were known as far back as this time,[19] and a smattering of references to enemies as having "monkey's faces"

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17 The negative epithet for rebel kings as "son of a nobody" was perhaps the most typical put-down; see Melville, in this volume.

18 Altman (2013) 35, 39.

19 E.g., a twenty-first century example (RIME 3/2 1.4.3) finds the Ur III king Šu-Sin claiming to have "sowed the heads of the just and the iniquitous (alike) like seeds" without distinction to their belligerent status; see further Altman (2013) 42–4, Dolce (2004), Richardson (2007), and Noegel (2007).

(e.g., ETCSL 1.7.1, or 2.1.5) or behaving like animals[20] can be found in literary works in the following centuries, language also occasionally echoed in royal inscriptions.[21] But degrading terms did not attain any real frequency until the first millennium empires, when there was a new emphasis on dehumanizing language, and a contraction of the recognition ethic for enemies of all kinds.[22] This included an expansion of similes for fleeing rulers as foxes, birds, snakes or frightened mice, and the introduction of new metaphors for killed enemies beginning in the eighth century, when Assyrian kings flayed enemy kings "like sheep" or butchered them "like pigs."[23] The new insistence on metaphorical dehumanization, above and beyond undoubtedly older practices, was clear. Also new was an aestheticization of torture and violence, titillating audiences and inviting their participation in what they saw by normalizing and valorizing it.[24] What we face has less to do with any change in practices of punishment (though there were innovations and intensifications) and more to do with their enhanced value in newly-emerging rhetorical systems. The tortures and executions of the Assyrian state were neither merely fictions meant to scare nor facts reflecting cruelty, but practices logically consistent with developments in political ideation, and selectively enacted in that context.

This has implications for recognition: if we are to read anything into what this means about the political imagination of that imperial age, it is that dissent had not only been voided of the partial legitimacy once recognized (though not approbated), as the cries of children and the restlessness of

20 An early characterization of enemies as animals includes RIME 3/2.1.4.3, in which the king of Ur says after a campaign that "the men who had evaded battle and who, like birds, saved their lives (by fleeing) to their cities, did not escape his hand." Animal similes for defeated enemies would become much more common in Neo-Assyrian times. Interestingly, Mesopotamian poetics generally preferred such comparisons to the feminization of the defeated enemy, which seems the expected derogation in modernity: see Richardson (2011), cf. Pugl (2003) esp. 336 and Chapman (2004).

21 A few ethnic slurs can be identified in the earlier record, also cleaving to animal metaphors, e.g., RIME 3/2 1.4.1, which calls Amorites "a ravaging people, with the instincts of a beast, like wolves," and 3/2 1.4.3, in which Šu-Sin calls the army of Šimaški "like a swarm of locusts." More common, however, were less freighted characterizations that ethnic others such as Amorites merely lacked the civilizing features of Mesopotamian life (e.g., cities, agriculture, burial), with no overt hostility and even a recognition of their differing lifeway (as herders, with a distinct language) or place within the divine cosmology (with a ^{d}MAR.TU hymnified as a son of the god Anu).

22 See, e.g., Lincoln (2007).

23 Richardson (2007).

24 Bersani and Dutoit (1985).

confused people; it had been entirely excluded from the framework of political dialogue. Dissenters were now unworthy of recognition as humans, much less as political equals.[25] Distinctions about insurgents versus combatants in antiquity must stand on the *ideational* withholding of recognition for belligerents, instead of on modern and etic categories of violations of rights; or on ancient practices, such as counterinsurgency or novel forms of violence. We must attend seriously to what the ancients wanted their contemporaries to think, rather than what they actually did, and set aside our moral judgement of it.

That empires intensify practices and displays of violence and dehumanization is hardly a new observation. Accounts of why this should be so sometimes locate the cause in imperial economic extraction, or in the social effects of militarization. A further explanation, however, should take note of the dimension of distance. Assyria's empire wiped away the world of small city- and territorial states which were close-knit communities and constituencies. The new imperial world wanted to be rid of such connective tissues of localism. This was effected on the policy level, as Assyria uprooted communities in deportation and resettlement, and on the cosmological level, too, since enemies were ideationally relegated to the periphery, shrouded in disorder, awaiting only the peace and order of the Assyrian king.[26] This topos worked its way into conceptions of geography, cultural alterity, the international legal order, and boundary-marking.[27]

But neither were displays of violations really meant to reassure the Assyrian core about the wholesale domination of the foreign Other, either, because they diffused messages about violence throughout the entire system. Imperial states generated their authority through precepts of loyalty, submission and omniscience, not through territorial or corporate belonging. These abstract conceptions of political membership eroded recognition at the face-to-face level, and the problem worked its way up through the community to the national level.

25 Lincoln (2013).

26 These issues are explored generally by, e.g., Liverani (1979); Reade (1979); and Fales (1982); as Younger (2009) 123 put it: "The real sense of a campaign is to be found in its desire for a restoration of order. The enemy has brought about disorder and chaos, and the Assyrian king must reinstate order, righteousness and life."

27 As examples of specific texts evocative of this ethos, see the so-called "Sargon Geography," which stylizes the peripheral world in archaic and pejorative terms (Liverani [1999–2001] esp. 80–4), and the accounts by Sargon of his enemy Rusa of Urarṭu as his "negative mirror image" (Van De Mieroop [2010]). On Neo-Assyrian vassal treaties, see Parpola and Watanabe (1988); on Assyrian monuments and "the making of imperial space," see Shafer (2007).

When the imperial king, remote and removed, became the symbol of membership rather than habitats of mutual recognition (e.g., cities, tribes, regions), the audience through which recognition was reflexively produced began to degrade substantially at all levels. The political status of both loyal subjects *and* disloyal enemies were both categorically impaired, and the withholding of recognition thus less meaningful overall.

Irregular Warfare

The existence of irregular wars in Mesopotamia can be correlated to the asymmetric political disputes lying behind them. Perhaps the best known cases have to do with the marginal and multi-ethnic groups who harried central states, such as the *ḫapiru* of the Syro-Levantine world. Such groups figure prominently in Bronze Age texts such as the Idrimi inscription, the Amarna letters, and the Sinuhe tale—as when Sinuhe, joined up with one such group, boasts of raiding settled lands:

> Every country for which I set out, I made my attack on it, and it was driven from its grasslands and wells; I plundered its cattle and carried off its inhabitants, and their food was taken away. I killed the people in it with my strong arm, my bow, my movements, and my excellent plans.[28]

It is clear in the exasperated reports of kingdoms that the political validity of these groups was considered inferior to that of states: “Who are the sons of Abdi-Aširta, the servant and dog?” wrote Rib-Adda of Byblos to pharaoh, complaining of the repeated incursions of *ḫapiru*; “Are they the king of Kaššu or the king of Mittani that they take the land of the king for themselves?” (EA 104).[29]

In lower Mesopotamia, there were similar marginal groups not marked by tribal ethnonyms, labeled only by descriptive terms like “headbashers” (SA.GAZ[30]), “enemies” (LÚ.KÚR) and “scattered people” (*nīšū šapātu*).[31] The difference between tribes (of which Mesopotamia had many) and other non-urban social groups may in the end be more apparent than ethnographically real. But it *is* a distinction that literate Mesopotamians really made: they knew the names of tribes, after all, and never shied away from using them when they

28 Parkinson (1997) 32.

29 Pryke (2011) 418.

30 AbB II 35; also, in Sumerian literature, GÁB.GAZ, “murderers.”

31 Cf. the enigmatic “*nisku*-people,” RIME 3/2 1.1.20 ll. 87–88.

did. Therefore, we should assume that when ethnonyms were not mentioned, it indicates that something other than ethnic identity was at stake (including, sometimes, a lack of specific knowledge of an enemy's identity).

Also, it must not be forgotten that asymmetric conflict between tribes and central states was a structural constant, differing from true insurgency in that insurgency must be a deliberate choice of tactics against other alternatives.[32] Many asymmetries in Mesopotamian military history, however, were merely byproducts of the cross- and small-scale warfare that characterized the larger geopolitical scene, and not part of any guerrilla strategies designed to systematically equalize imbalances of force. Unequal applications of force simply reflected a world in which inequalities between major actors were very much the rule, since no homology or isometry of political organization had yet emerged.

Studies of the Mesopotamian military and warfare have been frequent of late,[33] which might suggest that Assyriologists can distinguish between traditional warfare, insurgency, and counterinsurgency in this historical setting. Yet it remains difficult to identify many accepted standards for the proper conduct of war or (therefore) their breach. A few protocols are known from statute law, including common practices for the treatment of prisoners of war,[34] the declaration of war and cessation of hostilities through treaties,[35] and the right-of-ransom for distrained soldiers and civilians (e.g., Codex Hammurabi §32).[36] Enough legal and military norms descend through the sources to suggest that their violation would reflect negatively on the legitimacy of any actor who abrogated them, as in the ninth century, when Aramean tribes were said to have prosecuted warfare against Babylonians "by murder and insurrection" (ABC 24 rev. 11–2).

We can turn to the Old Babylonian period (ca. 2000–1600) to illustrate the use of unconventional and asymmetric tactics. The period provides rich sources for warfare. This might mean that we are given a window onto military practices which were simply not as well documented in other times; or it might

32 See esp. Claessen (2011) 14–16 on the permanent "State of Warre" (though not permanent fighting) as a structural constant of chieftaincies.

33 Burke (2008); Crouch (2009); Fales (2010); Vidal (2010); Richardson (2011); De Backer (2013); Neumann et al. (2014).

34 Gelb (1973); Saggs (1982); Englund (1998) 179; Seri (2013); Altman (2013) 42–4, 63, 103, 108–10, 158, 214; see now Steinkeller (2013) on an Early Dynastic II "prisoner plaque," listing tens of thousands of prisoners.

35 Altman (2013) 52–3, 92.

36 Van De Mieroop (2004) 96–7; Altman (2013) 64–5.

mean that the period was atypical in this regard; I have argued elsewhere for the former understanding.[37] In this case, however, the major features of insurgent tactics described below can in fact be documented for other periods as well.

Raiding,[38] to begin with, was a routine enough problem for states that the depletion of resources was not only a persistent military concern, but a commonplace ledger-entry matter for accountants: so-and-so many adult cattle and calves, dead, living, and stolen.[39] The mixed-farming regime of Mesopotamian cities meant that every hinterland was dotted with herds of thousands of sheep and goats ripe for the rustling. Letters from the city of Mari, for instance, discuss reprisals against raiders who had captured some sheep; the injured parties simply raided the raiders right back (ARM 26/2 483).[40] Raiding for animals was thus a sustained, opportunistic practice of both tribes and major states, attested from at least Ur III times down to first millennium Neo-Assyrian letters.[41] It is difficult to determine whether or when this was "warfare" of any kind: sometimes it was just a matter of small bands rustling a few dozen sheep,[42] but sometimes it did involve organized details of hundreds of troops carrying away thousands of animals.

And often people as well:[43] the seizure of people for labor was known from earliest times, and the expelling or resettlement of enemy populations

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37 Richardson (2012) 16.

38 "to raid": Sum. ḪUL, Akk. (most commonly) *šaḫāṭu* (from *šaḫāṭu*, lit. "to jump out"; *šiḫṭu*, "razzia"), with usage as late as Standard Babylonian and extending into ominous corpora; note *ḫarrān šiḫṭi*, lit. "raiding expedition"; also, in context, *miḫṣu* (lit. a "blow"). From Old Babylonian times, note also *sâgu* and *sadādu* (from which, *saddu*, "raid," and *sādidu*, "raiding party").

39 Goetze (1948) no. 10, an account of 2,667 sheep and their yield of wool includes two entries for "sheep which the enemy took" (*ša* LÚ.KÚR *ilqū*); these numbered 483, in this case about 18% of the herd. See also AbB XIV 81.

40 All references to Mari texts (ARM, FM, M., and A.) derive from the translations of Heimpel 2003.

41 E.g., SAA I 82, 84, 250; III 50; IV 5, 9, 18, 44; V 227; VIII 194, 237, 238; X 100, 364; XV 118; XVI 129; XVII 24, 55; XVIII 149 and 175; XIX 26, 69, 72, 125, 176, 182, 192 and 201.

42 ARM 26/2 514, involving a contingent of probably fewer than 100 men seizing 30 people and 50 head of cattle; similarly ARM 27 69 and 70, a matter of fewer than 10 raided sheep.

43 ARM 26/2 414; 422: 1,300 animals taken by enemy troops, by thousands of enemy troops, seizing not only sheep, but oxen, donkeys, and people; 425: Turukkeans take the sheep of Išme-Dagan ("all of them!") and carry off "the inhabitants of four cities"; 430: 600 enemy troops set out to raid cattle; 506: 700 sheep rustled by Ekallatum; also ARM 6 27 (p. 484), M.9157 (p. 513). Cf. SAA I 82: "They plunder cities; they never plunder sheep or camels, but they do loot people," and RIMA 1 78.1, raiding by Katmuḫu on Assyrian borders.

remained a tool of states for thousands of years.[44] Predatory raiding on caravans in open country is also attested (e.g., AbB IX 160; XI 61, 193; XIV 53), though an understanding existed that merchants and goods under transport ought to be exempt or at least redeemable from such depredations.[45]

Raiding was not always about resource acquisition; many military sorties aimed to deplete enemy supplies and infrastructure.[46] One letter reports an incursion of enemies who destroyed thirty irrigation dikes of a town's best fields; another, an attack timed to coincide with harvest-time, tying up manpower and putting pressure on the food supply; a third concerns a canal-excavation work detail attacked by 5,000 men; a fourth, an attack by Babylon on Ešnunna to burn its barley, seize prisoners, and generally "harass the land" (ARM 26/2 462, 511, 510, and A.3669+, respectively). This last episode may be the same discussed in ARM 27 141, when insufficient raiding earned Hammurabi's troops a stern rebuke from their king:

> The Babylonian troops made an incursion into the land of Ešnunna and burned the grain. They carried off prisoners of war, cattle and sheep. Hammurabi went to Puš below Sippar to meet them and received the prisoners of war from them. (But) he made them return, (saying): "Return! Follow up on your stroke!" They returned .... (but) the enemy got hold of news about them, and the troops returned empty-handed .... the servants of Hammurabi consulted, (saying) "How can 5,000 troops return empty-handed to camp? They must stay one day, two days in Ša-Baṣim and return to campaigning!"[47]

Troublingly, it was not always possible to determine either the identity of raiders—

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44 The Sargonic king Rimuš devoted several inscriptions to records of men he expelled from various cities.

45 One Mari letter (A.350+; see Heimpel [2003] 35 and n. 111), offers this about the seminomadic pastoralists called the Ḫana: "Like a merchant who moves between war and peace, the Ḫana move between war and peace in their comings and goings." See also Altman (2013) 80, 96.

46 The destruction of crops is attested as early as the Early Dynastic Lagaš-Umma war (RIME 1 9.9.5 vii 7–9); note also the policy of Middle Assyrian kings to not only destroy the crops of enemies, but to re-sow those fields with "salty plants" to prevent the refoundation of enemy cities, e.g. RIMA 1 76.3 (Adad-nirari I) and 77.1 (Šalmaneser I).

47 On the exploitation of Ešnunna's crops by the besieging Babylonians, see Richardson (2005b) 47–50.

> Be it the Hadnean, be it the Turukkean, someone attacked Ṣubatum on the bank of the Tigris . . . and captured 40 men and women and 1 hundred head of cattle. (ARM 26/2 523)

—or where they might strike—

> [The enemy] may be headed for an attack—be it against the livestock of the land of Karana, be it against the livestock of the land of Andarig, be it against the livestock of the outback of my lord—I do not know. (ARM 26/3 430)

Raiding was thus not only disruptive to economic production and civilian life (regular warfare does this, too[48]), but created a further dimension of instability by making the time, place and nature of violence unpredictable. Unpredictability being a constituent element of "terrorism,"[49] one finds it particularly emphatic when framed in geographic terms. The prevention of free movement across open country by "enemies" was a repeated lament of merchants and travelers even in peaceful times,[50] and the theme of an unstable countryside (Akk. *libbu mātim*) pervades the letters.[51] Reports of "harm in the land" were common (ARM 26/2 385, 416, 419, 515),[52] or that: "the land is stirred up"; "the routes are cut"; "the entire land . . . is sleepless";[53] "I am afraid the Turukkean will make an incursion and encroach on the land"; "the land of Larsa, all of it, is sleepless; it is gripped by terror, and everybody cares only for himself (lit., keeps carrying his head)"; and "there is choking fear in the land of Idamaraṣ" (ARM 26/2 542, 548, 521, ARM 27 154 and 161, and ARM 26/2

48 Of course the cessation of raiding was a desirable thing, and even a treaty term, as in A.285, in which one king swears: "On this day I am at peace and there will be no attack between us. You sow! And I shall sow. And do not be concerned about your livestock!"

49 Cf. Schwartz (1998) 494: "It is the symbolic nature of terrorism which most fundamentally distinguishes this breed of violence from others."

50 Richardson (2012) 26–7.

51 See also ARM XIV 81 and 148, and the evidence discussed in Richardson (2005); and also Heimpel (2003) 586 on "land" as a term to designate its inhabitants.

52 See especially A.3669+ with Heimpel (2003) 511 and n. 175 discussing the idiomatic phrase "to harass the land."

53 The trope of sleeplessness was hardly metaphorical, since distinctly unmetaphorical night raiding is well-attested: see ARM 26/2 358, 418, 419, 421 (in which villages were said to be "devoured" at night). In parallel, sleep and peace were semantically connected through the verb *nâḫu*.

359, respectively).[54] It is not always possible to historically contextualize specific passages in the letters, or clearly distinguish warfare from raiding, but the latter was obviously a major consequence of a political geography which featured—contrary to some accounts of the situation[55]—a great deal of open and uncontrolled land.[56]

The fear of attack anywhere and anytime was a regular feature of civilian life in unsettled times. Outlying villages were gathered into centers and strongholds, sometimes evacuating thousands of people. The removal of civilian populations then had effects on institutional resources: "Once we evacuate a population of 10,000," one official lamented, "and also leave their grain behind, it will be a heavy burden for the palace to feed them" (ARM 26/1 35).[57] Hoarding, rationing, and profiteering were thereby the extended results of anxieties about raiding, as well as the emergency housing of refugees (ARM 27 25; AbB XIV 114). Fear as a product of war is, of course, a verity; but particular to asymmetric warfare is the anxiety which erases what stable categories of social life remain under conflict—the lost sense of control over time, place, and target, the creation of reactive strategies based on fear of the unknown rather than the known, and the seeming ubiquity of danger.[58] What forms the basis of affective fear is an extended or permanent sense of threat, which B. Massumi defines as a "form of futurity [with] the capacity to inform the present without presenting itself."[59]

The Mesopotamian environment was well-suited to asymmetric warfare, illustrated by the fact that the open countryside that made isolated settlements

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54 Cf. SAA V 202 and XIX 188, cases of "terrorized" districts.

55 E.g., North, Wallis, and Weingast (2012), following a good deal of specialist literature.

56 Richardson (2012) 10–15. Even the most famous case of hostilities resulting from apparently encroaching borders, the Lagaš-Umma war, is actually described otherwise in the original texts, that the border was created as a "no-man's land" (RIME 1 9.5.1 ii 3).

57 See also ARM 26/2 437 and 515, and ARM 27 113; see also AbB XIV 8, in which enemies are said to have prevented barley from being brought from storehouses outside of Babylon into the city.

58 The particular condition of this "old" kind of asymmetric war, Periera (2003) 392 argues, is already being replaced by a "new" one: "Large set-piece conflicts between uniformed armies on battlefields—the hallmarks of the 'Clausewitzian' era—are likely to be increasingly replaced by shadowy, intermittent confrontations between a bewildering array of small, well-equipped, mobile armed forces, some organized by states and some not."

59 Ironically, a radically underdeveloped topic of the secondary literature on terror is fear itself; on the affective properties of "fear" and "security," see the work of the philosopher Brian Massumi (2005) esp. 35.

vulnerable was the same one which allowed escaping raiders to routinely slip away (e.g., ARM 26/2 336; AbB XIII 60). Escape into the wilderness was not eschewed by kings, either: as early as the third millennium, enemy rulers were said to have lighted out for the mountains, swamps and steppes, with ensuing manhunts and (sometimes) capture.[60] A knowledge of landscape[61] extended to the use of terrain as a force multiplier, as when units moved "by way of the brush" or used steppe routes as a "short cut" to flank or avoid enemy forces (ARM 26/2 387, 500, ARM 27 65).[62] Landscape features were also used to spring ambushes, in actions where surprise and speed played more important roles than force strength.[63] Other guerrilla tactics were used, such as night marches, known from as early as Utu-ḫegal in the late twenty-second century (RIME 2 13.6.4, ll. 90–100), and unconventional tricks, such as the use of impostors or disguises to fool the enemy (ARM 14 104+ and 26/2 515). "Water warfare," the diversion or damming of rivers and canals, is also a feature of the record: in one third millennium case, a king claimed to have killed 2,525 people following a battle by redirecting a river to flood their city.[64] This kind of "environmental terrorism," however, was likely more effective symbolically than tactically.[65]

The asymmetric use of landscape is especially prominent in Assyrian narratives, as early as the late second millennium, about rooting out tribal enemies in the mountainous landscapes to the north and east. Šalmaneser I, for instance,

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60 The Gutian king Erridu-pizir (RIME 2 2.1.1), hunting down the enemy leader of the land Madga, gives us an early case of this kind of warfare; see also the flight of Indasu (RIME 3/2 1.4.5) or Eḫli-Tešub to Nairi (RIMA 1 78.1). Manhunts and enemies escaping like all kinds of animals—like foxes, birds, snakes and dogs—populate the annals of many later Assyrian rulers (Richardson [2011] 50–1).

61 Though guides were sometimes necessary, e.g., ARM 27 168; perhaps also the "men of the streams" with knowledge of the steppe mentioned in ARM 26/2 481.

62 Cf. ARM 2 30+ and 28 6, in which armies jockeyed to gain the superior position on riverbank terrain.

63 ARM 26/2 357, 358 (*šūšubātu*, lit. "a sitting"; also *šubtu*), 379; ARM 27 68 (*erru*, "noose"), 168 ("And the enemy who attacked [them] ... they were not seen"); ARM 2 22 ("There was no bridge where they could lay an ambush"); AbB XIII 60 (Akk. *gišperru* / Sum. GIŠ.BAR "trap"; similarly, Utu-ḫegal, "[I] laid a trap," RIME 2 13.6.4.

64 "Water warfare" forms a minor theme in Mesopotamian history, such as the episodes of RIME 2 13.6.4 (cf. 1.4.6), in which Utu-ḫegal charged that Tirigan, the Gutian chief, had blocked off water; the year-name "o" of Abi-ešuḫ (ca. 1700), who dammed the Tigris, apparently against enemies to the south; and possibly Hammurabi's destruction of Ešnunna by flood (Van De Mieroop [2004] 52), though the evidence there is ambiguous; see Frayne (1989). In all, the withholding of water seems to have been the more common and effective weapon than flooding.

65 Schwartz (1998) 494.

hunting bands of Qutu tribesmen in the high north, found that his enemy simply waited out the invaders by leading the Assyrians deep into hilly terrain, until they were simply too hungry, thirsty and tired to continue. Šalmaneser's successor, Tukulti-Ninurta I, continuing the same campaign, transformed the physical environment into a heroic backdrop for his account, chasing his foe across an "extensive countryside" filled with caves, ravines, and rugged slopes, atop which the enemy had "taken up positions for conflict" (RIMA 1 77.1, 78.1 and 78.5). The Assyrian narration, though voiced with its usual air of inevitable victory, cannot hide that this was the grueling, slogging campaign of a conventional army trying to root guerrilla insurgents out of a hostile landscape. Such stories would reappear time and again in Assyrian accounts of mountain and marshland campaigns well into its high empire period, centuries later. The varied topography of the empire obliged the Assyrians to commit their conventional war machine to irregular operations on a regular basis.

Spectacular violence was another irregular tactic used by states to degrade and depersonalize political challengers, just as judicial violence was used to punish criminals. A few Middle Bronze Age examples: mutinous officers were humiliated by being paraded naked before their troops (ARM 27 151), and individual raiders were killed as examples to others.[66] Rebels were not only executed in grisly fashion, but their mutilated bodies displayed through public draggings (ARM 26 413: "throughout the land"), their heads removed and delivered to their allies (ARM 26 511: "herewith, the head of the one who relied on you"), or "carried around from city to city" (ARM 2 48). Such measures could of course only be effective if we assume there were public audiences for them. The well-known systematic violations of Neo-Assyrian times thus had their roots in much older, if less frequent (or less frequently emphasized), practices.

The occasional and tactical use of asymmetric violence in the exploitation of raiding, landscape, and terror was, therefore, obviously not unknown in Mesopotamia. But the *systematic* use of military terror was rare to a vanishing point, e.g., attacks on religious sites or ritual occasions (though the betrayal of allies was strategically common);[67] the deliberate targeting of civilians in

66 CAD D s.v. *dâku* v. ("to kill") 1 a-1', citing a letter of the king of Babylon: "Let (the soldiers I have sent you) kill one or two of the gangs (*ḫarrānātim*) which keep making raids so that they may become afraid."

67 One exception may be the claim of the Gutian king Erridu-pizir to have struck down an enemy army while it was sacrificing goats to the gods in Agade, RIME 2 2.1.2.

attack,[68] especially women and children;[69] or their use as human shields.[70] And what appears not at all in the record are the kinds of deliberate violations of military norms and customs we associate with modern terror, such as kidnapping, attack under flag of truce, or the disguise of military forces as civilians.

Mesopotamian warfare largely remained a mode of interaction between states, and not between states and their entire populations or cultures, and the state's hegemonic power to diffuse authority through fear was tightly constrained within its modest infrastructural powers in law, commerce, and religion. Recognition and asymmetry were not conceptually alien to Mesopotamian culture, but neither were they developed to any point of becoming structural features of political life.

State Terror and the Foundations of Violence

What was the early state's interest in and capacity for dispensing violence and terror? It is not unusual for students of the human past to account for the origins of things in violence (see above, n. 4). Political power has been one of the principal phenomena explained in this way. Seeking the roots of the state in early Mesopotamia, one thinks of Weber's axiomatic and diagnostic formulation, and looks to deep antiquity for the first monopolies of legitimate symbolic violence.

These expectations are satisfied to a modest extent. The visual repertoires of early states do include violent motifs which permit readings as legitimizing. Rock-reliefs of the king as the hunter of wild animals, for instance, have been understood to reference the triumph of political order over disorder through force of arms.[71] Prestige weapons in the Early Dynastic royal cemetery at Ur

68 Two rare cases may be noted. Utu-ḫegal charged the Gutian king Tirigan in his polemic with "taking away wives and children" (RIME 3/2 13.6.4); Altman (2013) 39 (also 172, 213) refers to these as "human rights violations" and "crimes against humanity," but this probably makes too much out of the polemical text. An earlier inscription of Rimuš (RIME 2 1.4.1 ii 21–29) may refer in broken context to the rescue of hostages held by an enemy. The impact of war on non-combatants, see most recently Nadali and Vidal (2014).

69 See Cogan (1983); cf. Otterbein (2000).

70 Cf. the legal practice of distraint, usually a civil action for debt, when it extended into a warfare context: AbB IX 32, ten shekels of silver paid to ransom a man "whom the enemy has caught."

71 On lion hunt imagery, see McMahon (2009) 121–2, with literature, who argues for an understanding of early motifs as carrying a fairly general meaning of domination, in contrast to its first millennium "reinvention." The connotation of warfare (specifically) from

seem to have endowed state violence with a sumptuary dimension.[72] Weaponry was denotative of rulership, especially the mace, the icon of legitimate authority *par excellence*, routinely depicted as the weapons of rulers. Inscribed maceheads bore some of the earliest royal inscriptions,[73] and the very sign for the mace in Sumerian (GIDRU) formed the lexical core of several early titles of rulers (as ENSI, PA, and UGULA). Violence was thus encoded aesthetically, symbolically, and logographically into the earliest semantics of legitimate rule. A focus on such evidence might indeed suggest that a monopoly on legitimate violence was the primary concern of the early Mesopotamian state.

But the connection between political legitimacy and violence is less robust or exclusive than one might want and its centrality is worth debunking. The Early Dynastic evidence is preceded, for one thing, by an absence of terms for weapons or soldiers in Late Uruk writing.[74] And when one turns to Mesopotamia's early royal inscriptions—the texts one might expect to most strongly elaborate this link—one encounters such a rhetorical underinvestment in violence as to illustrate its marginality. Warfare ranked quite low in terms of topical importance in the Early Dynastic corpus, lagging far behind the subjects of temple construction, ritual performance, and the bestowal of votive gifts to gods. These topics, it seems, just do not interest *us* as much. And in the few cases in which warfare *did* appear in early royal inscriptions,[75] one

early animal hunt scenes is derived only by analogy to objects from millennia later, when those references are much more clear.

72 The so-called "Standard of Ur," also from the burials, further married legitimate force to peace and prosperity through a dyadic representation of martial triumph and feasting.

73 E.g., RIME 1 9.4.19; the inscriptions themselves usually make no reference to military power, however.

74 Englund (1998) 98, notes that among Late Uruk lists of stone and metal objects one finds, at most, only knives (probably as tools rather than weapons); and 179 and n. 410, that despite signs for "persons subjected to forced labor" (i.e., SAG+MA, "under the rope," and ERIM, "under the yoke"), the meaning of ERIM as "soldier" emerged only much later, "after its immediate pictographic meaning was lost." By this account, remarkably, the designation of "captive" preceded that of "soldier." As Gernez (2008) 126 argued it, "… the Uruk system [of writing] was able to integrate [terms for metal weapons], but it didn't really, probably because of its economical and social organisation, which [did] not rely on violence or warfare."

75 E.g., RIME 1 14.17.1-.2, 15.1.1 and the inscriptions of the Lagaš dynasty. Some texts describe the construction of monumental burial mounds following conflicts (e.g., RIME 1 10.8.1-.2; 10.9.1; 10.12.5-.8; 10.4.1), but the intent of these edifices is unclear—sometimes they seem reverential burials of the king's dead, sometimes victory mounds made out of heaped-up enemy corpses. See Richardson (2007) positing a built-in ambivalence of the practice (compare with Olyan 2014), and Suriano (2012) who sees them as markers of a cosmo-

mostly finds only the barest investment in language legitimizing or justifying it, only simple declaratives, for example:

> For the goddess Inanna, Enna-il, son of A-Anzu, who smote Elam with weapons. (RIME 1 8.3.1)

Such an example does not give us very much to connect violence with political legitimacy: the topical focus is not in fact on a battle, but on the *ex-voto* gift on which the inscription itself appeared;[76] the warfare is mentioned only secondarily in the epithet and in a subjunctive clause; and Enna-il is not legitimized by any title, neither as "king" nor "ruler." [77]

Of the fourteen cities productive of Early Dynastic royal inscriptions, only one—Lagaš—invested warfare with ideological significance: in the king's personal superiority over other specified elites,[78] heroism in battle,[79] and ideal qualities (RIME 1 9.5.1 v 22–30); and in his protection of sovereign land (RIME 1 9.3.5 vi 6–8), international law (RIME 1 9.3.1),[80] divine mandate (RIME 1 9.3.1), administration of justice (RIME 1 9.3.1), and domestic order (RIME 1 9.4.9 iii 5–8). The topos was distinct in this case, even jarringly modern in its infrastructural claims, but not *common* to what we know of early Mesopotamian kingship more broadly. And even at Lagaš, the topic of warfare was relatively unusual: it appears in the inscriptions of just five of its nine kings, and only one-sixth (n=21 of 121) of all inscriptions from that city.[81] And in this subcorpus, any narrative focus on violence is on the illegitimacy of the *enemy*'s violence, not the heroic violence of Lagaš or its king: it was the enemy who

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gonic past; cf. Frayne's interpolation (RIME 1, in the relevant passages, op. cit.) of "honouring his own casualties" for most of these inscriptions; and Altman (2013) 64–5.

76 Many royal inscriptions bore only the name and title of the king as a way of labeling the objects themselves as "property of RN."

77 One would expect either LUGAL ("king") or ENSÍ ("ruler"). As the text was preserved on a later (Ur III) copy, it cannot be said on what type of object the inscription was made, but weapons were in the vast minority of such objects, more typically vessels, statues, or semi-precious stones.

78 As in Ur-Nanše's identification of a dozen specific adversaries from Ur and Umma (RIME 1 9.1.6b).

79 Also E-anatum (RIME 1 9.1.6b).

80 E-anatum introduced the motif of the enemy city Umma's appropriation of productive land as a failure to repay a loan.

81 For inscriptions attributable to individual rulers, one finds warfare mentioned in RIME 1: Ur-Nanše: 1 of 32 known inscriptions; A-kurgal: 0/3; E-anatum: 13/18; En-anatum I: 5/20; En-metena: 1/30; En-anatum II: 0/1; En-entarzi: 0/1; Lugalanda: 0/3; Urukagina: 1/13.

smashed monuments and shrines (RIME 1 9.5.1 ii 36–42), transgressed boundaries, violated oaths, destroyed crops, plundered temples, and even wounded the king of Lagaš. Meantime, the Lagaš king Urukagina, in summarizing his legitimacy to rule, asked rhetorically: "As for me, what do I have (to my name)? I have not committed acts of violence!" (RIME 1 9.9.4 ii' 4'–6').[82]

Any image of early Mesopotamian kingship as preoccupied with valorizing conquest and warfare has been constructed by cherry-picking among the royal inscriptions:[83] violence was not the emphasis. The principal concerns of the state as it voiced them had to do with piety, civic works, and prosperity; in the persuasion of state clientele through building, not destroying—not because early states were kinder and gentler, but because their power vis-à-vis the societies they ruled was in fact quite low.[84] Only gradually did kings take on epithets and imagery of just violence,[85] always careful to couch them in the language of divine justice and order.[86]

Royal authorities were still the chief purveyors of what organized violence there was, but they were as slow to exercise it as they were to police private violence. As James Whitman has pointed out, the supposition that Mesopotamian state law emerged to "supervise and institutionalize the violence of the state of nature [i.e., of private vendettas and vengeance]" is flawed because early law codes actually devote little attention to such things, chiefly interesting themselves in the regulation of institutions (mostly and reflexively its own), commerce, and community practices.[87] Whitman's view is also true because private

82 See similarly the "negative confession" of E-anatum of Lagaš, RIME 1 9.3.1. Altman (2013) 27, "The relative rarity of belligerent descriptions in those inscriptions may in turn be understood as reflecting reluctance to openly declare an aggressive act."

83 E.g. Fagan and Trundle (2010) 1 and 7, citing the Lagash inscription: "One need look no further than ancient literature to gauge the centrality of war to ancient societies."

84 The primary concern of early Mesopotamian states was its effort to persuade unattached populations to sign on as state clients; to join, not to submit to domination, Richardson (2012) 8, 17, 29, 35.

85 E.g., the Sargonic introduction of "mercilessness" as a royal quality "I showed mercy to no-one," RIME 2 1.1.13 and 2.1.5.5.

86 Altman (2013).

87 Whitman (1996); see also Altman (2013) 12. Thus the Early Dynastic "reforms" of Urukagina mention nothing about either violent crimes or punishments. The twenty-first and nineteenth/eighteenth century law codes of Ur-Namma and Babylonia (see Roth [1995]) do all address violent crime and call for some violent punishments (or the substitution of payments for talionic venegance), but the great majority of provisions do not deal with such matters, and there is little unequivocal evidence for the state's actual exercise of juridical power in such matters.

and community violence continued to be exercised extensively and openly alongside the king's law.[88] Of course, distinguishing between authorized and unauthorized violence is not without its problems; but having noted the slow development of warfare as a legitimizing topos, one sees that Mesopotamian states' exercise of legal violence was matched to their low capacity.[89] As much as Mesopotamian states *eventually* grew to interest themselves in controlling and dispensing violence, the notion that it was an original or foundational feature of the political ideology of the third and second millennium is due for serious revision (and perhaps especially as a contrast to early Mesoamerican cases).

Fear, however, was a central pillar of Mesopotamian political ideology—early, middle and late—in the precept of the king's fearsomeness. Understanding this idea in its social context requires us to try to conceive of fear as a positive political attribute, with sacral and even aesthetic qualities, with its manifestation in violence as only one dimension. Such an understanding is counterintuitive enough to us moderns to want explanation, if not justification; an account of how "terror" operated as an ideological *modus vivendi*. To begin with, the image of the Mesopotamian ruler was one in which he, like the gods, was endowed with an aspect of "terror" (*pulḫu*/*puluḫtu*, both nominalized forms of the verb *palāḫu*, "to fear"), frequently associated with a luminous or radiant appearance (Sum. ME.LÁM, Akk. *melammu*).[90] Much has been written on this subject, and I will summarize rather than retread all that ground here.[91]

Context and usage leads us to see this cultural ideal of terror as connoting a mixture of political dominance, social authority and religious awe. The ruler's "fearsome aspect" was qualitatively identical to the "terror" it produced;[92] it was borne on the ruler's forehead or issued from his mouth; it could be worn as adornment, insignia, or garment; it had translative power (e.g., it could be "cast," "poured out," or "cover/clothe" enemies and subjects); it could reside in his weapons, his clothing, even in his shadow. Fear had a locative aspect, going before or after the king; it had qualities, such as hostility or strength; and it was

88 E.g., the hideous vengeance killing carried out in retaliation for a murder, described in ARM 26 434.

89 See Richardson (forthcoming).

90 CAD M/2 s.v. *melammu* s.

91 Principally, Oppenheim (1943); subsequently, Cassin (1968); Winter (1994); see now Alster (2007) and Emilianov (2010), with literature.

92 For an early example, see RIME 1 9.3.5 vi 6–7, 9, in which "Elam/Kiš trembled before E-anatum," etc.

productive of poetic similes, e.g., that the ruler's terrifying aspect was like a ghost, a dragon, or a heavy fog.[93]

The word *puluḫtu* was also used to refer to regular everyday fear, to the terror of a nightmare, the panic of individuals and mobs, or any widespread public anxiety. Moreover, the same term denoted not only both the pedestrian "fear" and the king's "terror," but also the reverence, piety, respect due to him—the entire complex of deference properly owed to superiors by inferiors. *Puluḫtu* encapsulated a thoroughly authorized and integrated set of social-political relations which found its way into all kinds of political speech, such as it was voiced in a royal hymn to Išme-Dagan, king of Isin:

> That fathers should be feared and mothers respected, that sons should pay heed to the words of their fathers, and that mercy, compassion and pity should be shown, that one should provide even one's paternal grandparents with food and drink—all this he established in Sumer and Akkad (ETCSL 2.5.4).

The fear which rulers properly inspired was to benefit the same ruled populations for whom they expressed custodial concern, i.e., to feed, clothe, and keep safe. Thus Šulgi of Ur, who was hymnified as "spreading fearsomeness" and claimed to wear "fear-inspiring lustre, my personal weapon, which I impose on the Land like a neck-stock,"[94] was the same Šulgi who styled himself as the shepherd of his people, who in return looked at him "with sweet admiration" for his provision of abundant harvests, safe highways, and academies of learning.[95] In this social-political grammar, "fear" was perfectly consistent with tropic presentations of rulers as caretakers and defenders of the same people in whom they inspired terror. Such apparent paradoxes were at the center of Mesopotamian political ideologies from their earliest to their latest incarnations.

Does a valorized concept of fear as a desirable feature of political life and part of a conceptualization of the public good count as "state terror"? Brice's discussion offers the useful idea that "terror is a symbolic act designed to influ-

93 See CAD P s.v. *puluḫtu*.

94 Šulgi Hymn A (ETCSL 2.4.2.1) and B (2.4.2.2); other references to "the Land" in contradistinction to "enemy lands" make clear that it referred to Šulgi's own domain, for which he, elsewhere in these same hymns, claimed credit for defending against enemies, endowing with prayer, inspiring with song (all Hymn B), founding its cities, fortifying it, and putting its highways in order (Hymn A); he was its "god" (Hymn A) and "best king" (Hymn B).

95 Šulgi Hymn A and B.

ence political behavior by extra-normal means, entailing the use or threat of violence," with fear as the mechanism for compelling compliance.[96] Meted out by the state, the acts discussed above, absent a consideration of their rarity, symbolic function and cultural context, might seem to qualify as "state terror," painting early Mesopotamian kingdoms as primitive and dystopian purgatories, chock-full of merciless autocrats and sadistic punishments. The meaning of *puluḫtu* has in this way practically begged for misunderstanding, as by the political scientist Jonathan Fine, who sees in the Mesopotamian[97] example the foundations of modern state terror in Middle Eastern cultures which have always "viewed political terror as a necessary and effective political tool."[98] Fine's argument claims Assyria's political terror as the cultural antecedent of especially "Arabic" concepts of "terror" in supposedly semantically embracing both horror (negative) and respect (positive).[99]

Such treatments would hardly be worth mentioning were they not so influential in neo-conservative arguments about violence as a quality innate to Islam or Middle Eastern cultures. So it is worth stating that nothing suggests that *puluḫtu* ought to be treated as the ancestor of either state terror (e.g., the "Great Terror" of Stalin's Russia) or modern "terrorism" (e.g., of modern insurgencies). In the first place, the Neo-Assyrian case to which Fine appeals was different in kind from both the claims and practices of earlier Mesopotamian states. Assyria in this period was unique among Mesopotamian states, both before and after, in its (especially rhetorical) devotion to grisly and public tortures and executions of enemies. Though I would agree that the empire indeed engaged in "state terror," it neither inherited nor—crucially—passed on any particularly Mesopotamian tradition in this regard. Its practices were products of imperialism, not tradition.

Neither could the political concept of *puluḫtu* be considered "extra-normal" in earlier (i.e., third- and second-millennium) states or cultures. That "fear" was supposed to have a positive social value would, by itself, hardly exempt or excuse (were that the historian's job) any actual Mesopotamian practice of

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96 Brice, chapter one, this volume, drawing from earlier work. See also Campbell (2014).

97 Fine (2010) 271, 284, misattributing its invention to "the Assyrians," "from 1100 BCE."

98 Fine (2010) 272.

99 Fine (2010) 272–4, explicitly exempting ancient Hebrew culture: "Unlike the Assyrians and the Greco-Roman world, the ancient Hebrews did not have a political understanding of terror;" cf. Collins (2004), and taking note of such episodes as the spoliation of Midian (Num. 31:7–19); the extermination of the house of Jereboam by Baasha (1 Kings 15:29); or the slaughter of Ahab's family (2 Kings 10:6–9). The "philological" analyses behind Fine's pronouncements are not worth examining.

"state terror." But what ought to interest us in "terrorism" is not to make a measure of its moral quality (or lack thereof), but its difference from other types of warfare and violence in terms of unexpectedness (militarily speaking) and repugnance (socially speaking). *Puluḫtu* present us with the opposite case: fear was an essential ingredient in the toolkit of legitimate authority, along with wisdom, justice, defense and care for the widow and the waif. Nothing in its presentation differentiated it from such qualities, nor took any justifying tone: it was entirely expected, and socially validated.

The ruler's *puluḫtu* was, importantly, never a claim that stood on its own except in the context of punishing enemies and protecting his people; it only had persuasive force for domestic audiences when it was tempered by mention of the ruler's socially-constructive qualities to which fear was in service, and balanced by claims of the ruler's "mercy" (ŠÀ-LA). "Terror," I warrant, must substantially vitiate or annul those other qualities to distinguish it from (mere) "fear." Decontextualized treatments of Mesopotamia *puluḫtu*, without reference to its operation within a larger complex of kingship ideology, composed of many other principles, will of course only selectively produce an image of "terror" as its preëminent precept. What we have instead is the fear of and reverence for an abstract quality of kingship, something like *maiestas*, and not "terror(ism)."

At the same time, it must also be admitted that representations of *puluḫtu* as legitimate originated with the very authorities they sought to legitimize. Apologies for fear as necessary to care is common to the rhetoric of oppression in everything from battering husbands to totalitarian rulers. We might be equally gullible to accept one of Stalin's exculpatory accounts of why his programs of mass terror were necessary to effect right rule as to accept the same from Šulgi; and we ought rightly to read such legitimizing accounts with a doubting, post-Orwellian eye.[100] But claims still tell us something of what was functionally persuasive, if not objectively true: they reveal the discursive grounds of power. Thus the generic restriction of *puluḫtu* to royal literature (i.e., in royal hymns and inscriptions; cf. letters), forms of political rhetoric, speaks to the term's ideational nature: it was conceptually important, but without any particular commitment to practice in reality, especially given its unverifiability relative to other claimed qualities. That is, where it was important to *demonstrate* the king's commitments to social-justice and defense claims with specific actions (such as the relief of debts or victory in war), "fearsomeness" (like "majesty") was conveniently without criteria for substantiation or falsification. In this connection, it is relevant to stress that *puluḫtu* in the sense of

100 See, e.g., Vacín (2013).

legitimate power was a poetic quality meant to emulate the gods; a numinous power that belonged to the divine sphere of transcendence rather than the mundane world of governance and verification.

There was thus little manifestation in practice of the "terror" so prominent in rhetoric. Unlike the Neo-Assyrian case, earlier claims about "pouring out terror over the enemy lands" were not matched by much more than episodes of traditional warfare. *Puluḫtu* in reference to the king was not reflected in private letters or scholarly literature, and the kinds of practices that might lead us to reflect on it as operational (e.g., mass detention, the surveillance state,[101] extrajudicial violence) are few and far between, though they do exist. It has been convincingly argued, for instance, that the group inhumations of the Royal Cemetery of Ur (ca. twenty-sixth century) were meant to shock elites into accepting a radical expansion of powers for kingship.[102] A second case that comes to mind are the pogroms of the Akkadian king Rimuš (twenty-third century), who exterminated and expelled specific populations from the rebellious cities of Sumer. One can, indeed, think of such examples; but they are not only few, but even historically unique. No systematic forms of applied extra-normal force or violence were built into early Mesopotamian state authority.

We come full circle: any idea of "state terror" as attaining hegemony in Mesopotamian political imagination is belied by the ubiquity of the rebellions which did not fear states. Even were one to accept that *puluḫtu* was an important form of royal ideology, one would have to contend with the fact that there were many, many instances in which people refused to be afraid. Like the singular power of the autocrat, the goal of generalized political terror was to render societies apolitical, but the *fact* of Mesopotamian rebellion as an equally durable form of politics leads us to think that as much as civil society ever feared the state (which may not have been much), the state had as much to worry about from its subjects.

Conclusion

In a project such as this book undertakes, readers might reasonably hope to read of ancient analogues or early forms of insurgency or terrorism as military-political forms. The corner of human history this essay comments on, however, was a world in which not only the details of the state idea were first being worked out, but their very precepts first established. As such, it is nearly

101 Cf. Matthews (2004).

102 A. T. Smith (2003).

impossible to make a meaningful distinction between insurgency versus rebellion (already difficult to distinguish from regular warfare) or "terrorism" versus other forms of violence: juridical, military, or private.

But this is still far from saying that the ingredients for them were absent; or that some of the first concerns of the early state as emergent forms were not demarcating the footprint of their autonomous authority through the creation of exactly those categories. Meantime, a dialectical historical progression of

> private violence ⇒ legitimized state violence ⇒ warfare ⇒ insurgency/terrorism

need not entail either that these forms always succeeded one another rather than accumulated (and thus coexisted historically), nor, more importantly, that the absence of insurgency and terrorism as ideal forms implies an absence of socio-political complexity. Indeed, the problem of legitimate and illegitimate violence was at the forefront of Mesopotamian political thought: as for most cultures, the tension between security and rights formed the background for many a Mesopotamian king—and many a Mesopotamian rebel.

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Chapter 3

Insurgency and Counterinsurgency in the Assyrian Empire during the Late Eighth Century BCE

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Introduction

During the eighth century BCE, Assyria made the transition from a hegemonic to a territorial empire in control of a well-organized provincial system, standing army, and vast wealth. The Empire experienced its greatest period of expansion under the leadership of Sargon II (721–705), who conquered lands from Egypt to the Persian Gulf in a series of expertly executed campaigns. Hundreds of cuneiform tablets and inscriptions dating to Sargon's reign document the process of Assyrian imperialism, and most significant for the present study, how the Assyrians dealt with different types of resistance, including insurgency.[1]

According to a current usage, "insurgency in the most basic form is a struggle for control and legitimacy, generally from a position of relative weakness, outside existing state institutions."[2] This type of resistance, therefore, is distinct from rebellion, which can involve recognized governments and have various objectives, and from civil war, in which internal factions vie for power. Throughout the long history of the ancient Near East, rebellion and civil war played a vital role in the development of states and the fortunes of empires, yet while tales of strife permeate the historical record, insurgency has left little obvious trace, even in the abundant sources from Sargon's reign. There are several plausible explanations for this state of affairs; because the Assyrians did not experience the same geopolitical conditions that we do now, they did not categorize opposition the same way either. In any case, a lack of clear evidence does not eliminate the possibility that insurgency occurred. In order to detect insurgency and counterinsurgency in eighth century records, it is important

1 All translations in this paper are my own, although it is inevitable that they resemble those of previous translators to some degree. As is the convention in Assyriology, words in square brackets reconstruct broken text, whereas words in parenthesis have been added to aid readers' comprehension.

2 *FM 3–24* (2014). See also *GAI* (2012) 28; and Brice, chapter one in this volume.

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to understand both the nature of the political culture that produced these sources and the problems involved in their interpretation.

Let us consider the geopolitical situation in the Near East during the eighth century. At the beginning of Sargon's reign, the Assyrian Empire comprised more than twenty provinces spanning the area from Syria-Palestine to northern Babylonia. Small kingdoms and city-states that the Assyrians did not annex became tribute-paying clients, whose status was sometimes, but not always, formalized through treaty agreement. The Empire's main foreign competitors were Urarṭu, Elam, Phrygia, and (in some sense) Babylonia, which between them claimed hegemony over assorted population groups within their own territories. Despite diverse cultural practices and language barriers, a system of international relations governed interactions both horizontally among kings of more or less equal status, and vertically between more powerful kings and weaker rulers.[3] Constitutional government did not exist; power resided with the individual—clan patriarch, tribal chief, city ruler, or great king—and thus everyone was associated with a hierarchical authority in some way. Political opposition aimed to augment personal power and improve family/clan prospects rather than introduce a new form of government or promote an alternative ideology. Under these circumstances, a successful uprising—including rare popular insurrections—never did more than "trade one king for another."[4] Even in Assyria, royal control was provisional and centralization incomplete. Although Sargon's closest advisers, the magnates, were loyal, the royal land management system and other societal factors caused some intra-elite rivalry and feuding.[5] Insurgency and counterinsurgency within the Assyrian Empire must be understood within this wider socio-political context.

One of Assyria's ablest kings, Sargon II fought throughout his reign to secure his empire and extend power over the greater Near East. Most of his campaigns were aimed at pacifying the mountainous territory to the north and east, where semi-independent kingdoms acted as buffers between Assyria and its rivals. Buffer kingdoms such as Šubria tried to maintain their independence by playing the stronger states—in that case, Assyria and Urarṭu—against each other and switching sides whenever politic. In effect, the great powers engaged in a "cold war" by striking at each other through proxies, spying relentlessly, and

3 Liverani (2000) 15.

4 Richardson (2010) xvii.

5 For the magnates, Mattila (2000); Parpola (2007). Denunciations, disputes, and reports of violence among lower level officials are frequent subjects of letters; e.g., SAA XV 168, which reports that one official has robbed and destroyed the household of another after terrorizing the servants.

fomenting trouble in one another's territories.[6] Within the Empire, provinces on the periphery suffered occasional civil disturbances and sporadic rebellions, while the core (the Nineveh, Aššur, Arbela triangle) remained relatively stable. To the south, Babylonia beckoned as the great prize, whose conquest would arrogate to the Assyrians full control of the trade from Arabia, the Persian Gulf, and Iran. Throughout the Near East, competition for scarce resources destabilized alliances and thwarted both the development and implementation of long-term imperial strategy.

Even with a sizeable standing army, Sargon could not occupy every square foot of his territory or hold it by force alone, so he attempted to manage communication, travel, and trade by controlling roads and major settlements. Thus free from imperial interference, unproductive hinterlands—marsh, desert, steppe, and mountains—attracted society's fringe—nomads, criminals, deserters, runaways, and (possibly) insurgents. Borders between states were correspondingly notional and difficult to police. The political conditions in remote or less stable areas of the Empire consequently favored insurgency, which tends to thrive in areas of military and political weakness. The Assyrians learned early on the importance of maintaining a fearsome reputation while varying the type and intensity of military operations to meet the exigencies of terrain, political circumstances, their objectives, and enemy practices and capabilities. Their enemies, too, learned that if they could not match the Assyrians on the battlefield, they could use other means to resist.

To be sure, as recognized modes of warfare fought according to established principles, insurgency and counterinsurgency are relatively modern phenomena. By contrast, the Assyrians and other Near Eastern peoples had no formal, written military doctrine but operated according to tradition and "what worked."[7] Although it would be misguided to suggest that conflicts in later cultures match those of ancient Assyria or that the ancients thought about warfare as we do, it is nonetheless true that irregular wars tend to follow similar patterns. Therefore, current terminology may have some explanatory power even if it does not correlate exactly with ancient conditions.

Given the geopolitical circumstances described above, we would expect insurgency in the Assyrian Empire to have been (to borrow an official typology) "traditionally organized" with insurgents operating within a preexisting social hierarchy, such as a clan, tribe, or client kingdom. As an empire won through violent conquest, Assyria was also more likely to spark "resistance" insurgencies (compelling an occupying power to leave) or "separatist" move-

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6 For the Assyrian intelligence system, Dubovský (2006).

7 For the Assyrian tactical system, Fagan (2010).

ments (seeking independence for a specific region) than “revolutionary” (changing the form of government), “reformist” (changing government policies) or “commercialist” (achieving material wealth) insurgencies, the proper conditions for which did not exist in the ancient Near East.[8] Although these modern classifications provide a useful model against which to test our source material, it is also vital to identify how the Assyrians themselves viewed, and consequently wrote about, their opponents.

Distinguishing Insurgency from Rebellion in Cuneiform Texts

Evidence of clandestine conflict is difficult to tease out of our multivalent sources for a variety of reasons. Just as geopolitics had an impact on what the ancients chose to record, it has affected what archaeologists have recovered. Historically, excavations have concentrated on monumental building complexes at the largest sites in the most accessible areas; that is, temples and palaces in state capitals located in Mesopotamia rather than, say, the Zagros Mountains. As a result, Neo-Assyrian texts not only vastly outnumber those of rival states such as Urarṭu and Elam, but also offer the only extant information about many smaller polities and tribes. Most relevant to the present investigation are two types of cuneiform text, royal inscriptions and letters. In spite of the large number of written sources available, their interpretation is fraught with difficulty.

Archives are incomplete and scattered over time and space, leaving major gaps in our knowledge. The men who wrote the letters used colloquial language and assumed that the reader was familiar with the context, including the date and the name of the reigning king, neither of which consequently ever get mentioned. It is rare to find letters dealing with the same subject and rarer still to discover a group that comes close to documenting an entire sequence of events. Likewise, royal inscriptions that celebrated the king’s deeds cannot be taken at face value, for their function was to confirm the king’s legitimacy not to record historical fact for posterity.[9] Since royal campaign narratives were written after the events they described and focused exclusively on the king’s activities, whereas letters were of immediate relevance and informed the king of events occurring outside his direct presence, the two text genres have little content in common. These problems notwithstanding, both types of

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8 For this classification, *GAI* (2012) 3–4; for an alternative classification, Metz (2012); on recent historiography on insurgency see Brice, chapter one, this volume.

9 For more on the letters, Parpola (1981) 117–42. For the royal inscriptions, Tadmor (1981) 13–34.

text reveal important information about the nature of the opposition that the Assyrians faced and how they responded to it.

Beginning in the eleventh century, Assyrian kings habitually celebrated their major accomplishments in writing in order to legitimize themselves before their gods and people. Self-aggrandizing campaign narratives only chronicled triumphs over foes of sufficient stature to require the king's personal attention; such texts never admitted defeat or mention marginal actors. According to the annals, the Assyrians always fought just, conventional wars in order to punish treaty-breakers and rebels, and to protect their subjects and allies. Over time, royal scribes recorded incidents of rebellion so frequently that its suppression became one of the chief indicators of a king's success. Every victory bolstered claims of legitimacy and demonstrated the king's ability to uphold social order against the forces of chaos. Scribes used set terms and phrases to denote the opposition; an enemy leader was a rebel (*ḫammā'u*, *bārānû*, *nabalkattānu*) or villain (*ḫābilu, bēl ḫiṭṭi*), whose treachery earned him derogatory epithets such as "perfect likeness of an evil *Gallû* demon" (*ḫiriṣ gallê lemni*), "the very image of murder spawn" (*zēr nerti ḫiriṣ*) or "evil Hittite" (LÚ*Ḫattu lemnu*).[10] These invectives described recognized belligerents; enemy kings, disloyal clients, or elites within a subject regime who overthrew their Assyrian-appointed ruler. Popular insurrections periodically ousted a client ruler in favor of someone outside the royal family. Although termed a commoner (*ḫupšu*) or "son of nobody" (*mār lā mamman*) in the inscriptions, this type of dissident usually belonged to the local elite, if not its ruling family.[11] The Assyrian king decided the issue either by claiming after the fact to have put the usurper on the throne or by summarily removing him from it. Occasionally, a defeated enemy king escaped Assyrian retribution and "in order to save his life, fled alone" (*ana šūzub napšētišu ēdēnuššu ipparšidma*) to an inaccessible place in the mountains or desert. This phrase, which turns up often enough in royal inscriptions to be termed a trope, in essence highlighted the enemy's transformation from legitimate opponent to impotent fugitive.[12] Although such men continued to

10 See for example *ISK* Prunk. 33 and 122.

11 On the term "the son of nobody" Lanfranchi (2009) 140–1, who notes that the Assyrians also used the phrase to denote someone they installed in place of, and unrelated to, a subject ruler.

12 A cursory search of the inscriptions of Tiglath-pileser III, Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon turns up three or four incidences of this type during each king's reign (http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/corpus/). See, for example, TPIII 8.1 ("he fled like a centipede and no one fou[nd his location]"); Senn 1.25 ("He abandoned his army and fled to the land of Guzummanu."); Es 30.4' ("He fled like a fox to the land of Elam.").

pose a threat, their degraded status precluded further notice of their opposition unless they could reassert their authority as kings. To the Assyrians, only conventional warfare against recognized belligerents provided a worthy means for the king to prove himself.

Counterinsurgency was a different matter, however. Glory-seeking Assyrian kings had little motivation for recording operations that were not as lucrative as the capture of rich, loot-able cities, as reputation-boosting as victory in battle, or as useful in public relations terms as the suppression of a local coup. By this reasoning, the type of unconventional action required to crush an insurgency was beneath official notice, because it did not advance the royal agenda in sufficiently public ways. Denied access to the state's scribal apparatus, insurgents seldom had the means to record their activities unless they succeeded, at which point they quickly adopted the usual trappings of kingship, transforming their story of illicit action into one of divinely mandated legitimacy.[13] Though Sargon himself took the throne under abnormal circumstances, his inscriptions stress his inherent legitimacy without exception. By contrast to the idealized royal war accounts, the royal correspondence, which deals with the day to day running of the Empire and thus the mundane aspects of maintaining order, refers to a wide range of illegal activity. In other words, the correspondence reflects a more complex reality than the annals claim.

Insurgency in Assyrian Letters

One promising way to identify insurgency in Assyrian letters is to look for the tactics normally associated with resistance movements and counterinsurgency. As noted previously, modern works on insurgency provide common vocabulary and hierarchies for identifying these tactics in the Assyrian records.[14] Generally speaking, insurgencies, like most social movements, pass through several stages and employ similar methods. In the incipient phase, insurgents use a common grievance against the target government as a call to arms. Initially weaker than the government they oppose, insurgents avoid direct confrontation in favor of agitation, sabotage, and isolated guerrilla attacks. When pressured by the government, they may seek safe haven in neighboring states and even base their operations there. Governments that are loath to recognize their own vulnerability often willfully mistake nascent

13 Richardson (2010) x.

14 *GAI* (2012); *FM 3–24* (2014).

insurgencies for isolated criminal activity.[15] As the resistance movement gains ground and members, its military endeavors become more frequent and sophisticated until adherents can eventually undertake conventional warfare. When insurgencies develop over a relatively long period of time and lack necessary resources, their leaders might obtain external support from the target state's enemies.[16] Any of these factors appearing in Sargon's correspondence potentially signals the existence of an insurgency.

Another way to approach the problem is to look at terminology. The Assyrians had no dedicated terms for insurgent or insurgency and apparently conflated all types of criminal behavior. A Neo-Assyrian neologism, *parriṣu* (plural *parriṣūte*) (*CAD* P, 191 and *AEAD*, 81),[17] usually translated "bandit, criminal, crook, outlaw, or traitor," proves illuminating in this respect. The fact that (as far as I have been able to determine) the word appears in letters, but not royal inscriptions, implies that the *parriṣu* was a low-status actor.[18] Out of the more than 1800 cuneiform tablets published in nineteen volumes of the State Archives of Assyria series, the word *parriṣu* appears in thirty-one letters, two administrative documents, and one prophecy.[19] Of the fourteen tablets that most likely date to Sargon's reign, six are too broken or cryptic for reliable interpretation (SAA V 124, 176, 231; SAA XV 231; and SAA XIX 188, 213), while one of the better preserved examples, in which an official complains of troopers "loitering in the center of Calah with their (cavalry) mounts like [common] thugs (*parriṣūte*) and drunkards (*šakkirūtu*)" (SAA I 154), clearly refers to basic criminal behavior. The remaining seven texts, however, seem to associate *parriṣūte* with politically motivated illegal activity or insurgency (SAA I 13; SAA V 200,

15 *GAI* (2012) 8.

16 *GAI* (2012) 11. See also, Byman et al. (2001), but the problem with applying such models to ancient insurgencies is that modern models of resource demands are heavily influenced by the capital requirements of gunpowder warfare and in some cases mechanization. See Brice, chapter one, this volume.

17 Note that in the Neo-Assyrian period *parriṣu* was sometimes written with the logogram LÚLUL, which in earlier periods represented the word *sarru* (liar, criminal). The Assyrians wrote *sarru* syllabically; *CAD* S, 183.

18 A search of The Royal Inscriptions of Neo-Assyria Project (RINAP) online http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/rinap/ turned up nothing. According to Dr. Jamie Novotny, who kindly searched the offline RINAP database for me, the word does not appear in the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III, Shalmaneser V, Esarhaddon, Sennacherib, Aššur-eṭel-ilani, or Sin-šar-iškun, or in the prisms of Ashurbanipal. Sargon's inscriptions do not appear to include it either (personal communication). Nor have I been able to find the term in the inscriptions of earlier kings.

19 SAA, http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/saao.

210, 227, 228; SAA XV 62 and SAA XIX 21). The usage in the correspondence of other kings is roughly equivalent to that of Sargon (e.g., SAA 6 35, 133, SAA 16 43, 68, 97, SAA X 316, 338).

That the Assyrians may have used the same word for criminal as for insurgent need not trouble us, for there has always been a great deal of overlap between the two. Both offenders commit crimes such as smuggling, robbery, and murder.[20] In theory, motivation is the distinguishing factor; criminals seek personal payoff and insurgents work toward fulfillment of political objectives. Nevertheless, the categories often blur:

> There are several reasons for the fuzziness. First is that individuals often have roles which are multiple, overlapping, and compatible rather than single, distinct, and mutually exclusive ... Second, distinctions between political and criminal organizations are sometimes fuzzy because even though motivations may be different, actions are similar. Third, criminals are highly opportunistic. If there are clear advantages (and limited risks) to working in one way or another with politically motivated individuals and groups, then cooperation will occur—sometimes in ways which make it difficult to disentangle motivations. Fourth, both individual and group roles can change over time. Sometimes, basically mercenary criminals become politicized, so that activities initially designed for personal profit become enmeshed in larger political purposes.[21]

In the ancient Near East, where survival regularly depended on aggressive pursuit of self-interest, the convergence of criminal and political activity was both natural and inevitable. Unfortunately, since Neo-Assyrian officials did not record law-breakers' motivations and due to the episodic nature of the surviving correspondence, the true character of the crimes committed is difficult to detect. The challenge, then, is to determine whether or not any of the *parriṣūte* mentioned in the letters could have been insurgents and whether the letters that report insurgent-like activities could describe actual insurgencies.

Resistance in Assyria

Won through conquest and (partly) maintained through repressive policies such as deportation, the Assyrian Empire undoubtedly harbored no shortage

20 It is a common historical theme that states label insurgents criminals and bandits as a means of denying them political legitimacy. Even today authorities debate the best way to classify insurgents, e.g., for example, Crawford (2010). See Brice, chapter one, this volume.

21 Williams (2009).

of aggrieved citizens. Despite their best efforts to appear ruthlessly efficient, Assyrian officials attempting to govern conquered areas often survived precariously among sullen, uncooperative people prone to violence. In one case, for example, an official writing to Sargon from the western province of Hamath cautioned that "there is always hostility (here) in the steppe but I am not negligent about the guard" (SAA I 176). In a similar report from the northern province of Tušḫan, the governor fretted that "some kind of a rebellion (*bārtu*) may occur; I am strengthening the guard—I am afraid of a rebellion" (SAA V 33), and at a different time in nearby Kumme the Assyrian delegate urged the secret execution of four men who had been "[in]citing the country" (SAA V 106). The emphasis on security in these letters underscores the conditional nature of Assyrian rule in the provinces, particularly those near enemy states, and belies the popular view of soulless Assyrian authority. On the contrary, the letters depict insecurity, and show that officials used persuasion, spy-craft, diplomacy, and threat as often as they relied on force.

Assyrian dominance required incessant vigilance and clever solutions. One of the characteristic strategies for maintaining control of conquered peoples was to relocate them either to the Assyrian heartland or some province of the Empire distant from their homeland. By moving whole populations to unfamiliar environments, the Assyrians sought to reduce conquered peoples' ability to rebel and so create a stable, dependent society. In other words, they recognized the potential for resistance and took steps to thwart its development. While it cannot be said that the Assyrians implemented a true "hearts and minds" policy, they certainly understood the advantage of incentive over coercion. In most cases, Sargon counted deportees as citizens and helped them to build their own houses, marry, and settle down on individual allotments to farm.[22] In return, the new citizens were subject to the same military and labor obligations as native Assyrians. The king charged his governors with overseeing deportees and keeping the peace in their provinces. Assyrian pacification efforts sometimes faltered when resistors took advantage of pervasive resentment to stir up trouble.

Two letters describe *parriṣūte* abusing or provoking the local deportee population. In one fragmentary report, an official assures that "the city of Turmuna where the king appointed me is very well. The land has been subdued. They are working the fields and plastering roofs. We are sta[nd]ing [in the cit]y as one. [Wher]e there were *parriṣūte* [there are…. W]here there were [….] (SAA

22 Oded (1979); Gallagher (1994) 57–65.

XIX 21).[23] The reference to farming and building indicates that the people in question were newly settled deportees.[24] According to the text, *parriṣūte* disrupted the settlers until an Assyrian official was able to re-establish order. Without the context and further details, it is impossible to determine whether the *parriṣūte* in question were opportunistic brigands or actual insurgents (perhaps deportees themselves), although the author's language and his emphasis on establishing peaceful unity seem more appropriate to counterinsurgency strategy than to standard policing. The type of low-intensity discord reported in the Turmuna letter was far from unique.

Two letters to Sargon from Šamaš-bēlu-uṣur, the governor of Arzūḫina, a province in eastern Assyria between Arrapḫa and Zamua, discuss an ongoing disturbance in the area. The first one deals with a group of *parriṣūte* making raids in Arrapḫa and Arzūḫina:

> As for the *parriṣūte* about whom the king, my lord, wrote me: 'They have attacked the attendants of the chief victualler in Babiti'—I have asked and investigated, but there isn't anything, and we have not heard anything. The king, my lord, wrote me: 'If you do not seize the *parriṣūte*, know that you will have to make good.' The *parriṣūte* of Arrapḫa (and) of the estate of the palace herald have joined together and are raiding there. Now I have moved [troops] up to guard: if they seize them, they will bring them t[o the king, my lord]. At the moment [I am sending] to the king [my] lord, the *parriṣūte* of the estate of the [....] that fell (into my hands) on the outskirts of Arzūḫina. (SAA V 227)

A second, fragmentary report, probably from the same official, notes that one of the crown prince's men had seized two Arzuḫinean and two Arrapḫaean *parriṣūte* with their accomplices and delivered them to the palace for questioning (SAA V 228). The existence of cooperating bands raiding freely in a relatively wide area implies that even in provinces close to the Assyrian heartland, the crown did not exert as much control as is usually assumed, though again it is impossible to ascertain whether the threat to order came from bandits, insurgents, or even from the officials' own men-at-arms. The fact that the

23 The author's name is not preserved and it may have been addressed to Tiglath-pileser III rather than Sargon. The location of Turmuna is not known, but Luukko (2012) 24 n. 3 suggests that it was in central Assyria.

24 Gallagher (1994). The letter can be assigned to Šamaš-bēlu-uṣur on orthographic grounds and because it deals with Arzūḫina, which he governed.

parriṣūte were increasing in number, had targeted the local official in charge of military provisions, and operated in land belonging to other high officials suggests something more seditious than mere lawlessness, while the Assyrians' various reactions—the king's demand for results, the crown prince's intervention, and official's intelligence gathering—compare well with modern counterinsurgency efforts.[25] Stability on Assyria's frontiers could be just as fragile.

Insurgent-Like Activities Involving Neighboring States and Clients

In addition to their many other duties, governors of frontier provinces had to contend with the rulers of neighboring client states and independent polities. The task made for some tense diplomatic situations. A letter written to Sargon II from Nabû-ḫamātū'a, the deputy governor of the province of Zamua, reported that the unnamed son of the Assyrian client king, Bēl-iddina, had been provoking deportees recently settled somewhere in his vicinity:

> A Mede has sent out to me a tablet from the governor (which says): 'Let your messenger bring (it) to the palace!' The people of the country of Bēl-iddina's son—with them I have spoken kind words and I have encouraged them. I said, 'The son of Bēl-iddina is a criminal and a *parriṣu*. He does not obey [the king. As for y]ou, let everybody [go] into [his house] (and) his field. Do your work! Let your hearts be glad. You are subjects of the king.' (Now) they are at peace and are doing their work. I sent them out of the six forts, saying, 'Go, one and all! Each to a field! Let him build, let him settle!' The king, my lord's, subjects have entered into (the area). The guard will be strong until the governor comes. Whatever the l[ord] king laid down as instructions for him, I shall do. (SAA V 210)[26]

In 716 Sargon appointed Bēl-iddina to rule Allabria, a newly-established client state in the central Zagros Mountains east of the Assyrian province of Zamua.[27] Although Bēl-iddina himself appears to have remained a stalwart supporter of Assyria, his son proved to be less tractable. According to the report, the

25 E.g., French counterinsurgency efforts against the Spanish guerrillas during the Napoleonic wars, Esdaile (2003) 250–79.

26 See also Gallagher (1994).

27 Fuchs (1999) 286. Bēl-iddina was probably a short form of Bēl-aplu-iddina. Note the possibility that this man was the governor of Zamua under Tiglath-pileser III before becoming king of Allabria under Sargon II in 716.

Allabrian prince interfered with new deportees either by inciting them into occupying a number of regional mountain strongholds or by threatening them until they took refuge in the forts. By denouncing the offender and reassuring the people that the king would protect them, the deputy governor defused tensions peacefully and without stirring up further resistance. The fact that he also promised to be on the alert until the governor's arrival (and therefore the arrival of reinforcements), suggests that opposition to the Assyrians continued to simmer.

On another occasion involving Bēl-iddina's difficult offspring, the Assyrian governor of Zamua, Šarru-ēmuranni, wrote to Sargon complaining that:

> Last year the son of Bēl-iddina did not go with me on campaign, but kept the men at home and sent with me young boys only. Now, may the king send me a mule-stable man (deportation officer)[28] and make him come forth and go with me. Otherwise, he will (again) rebel (*ibbalkāta*), 'fall sick', shirk, and not [go] with me. (SAA V 200)

Assyrian clients were required to send troops to accompany the Assyrians on campaign. The letter points to repeated dereliction of duty that could be associated with the events reported in the previous letter, though which episode came first is not certain. In both cases the son resisted Assyrian authority, once passively and once more actively. Did the behavior of Bēl-iddina's son constitute an insurgency at the inchoate stage before the authorities recognized it as more than criminal and before it had coalesced into an organized resistance? Or were his actions merely those of an irresponsible and ambitious prince chafing under the rule of his father's overlords? The Assyrian officials in the immediate vicinity did little other than soothe the deportees, improve their guard, and complain to the king, and it is not clear whether they tolerated the son because they needed the father or because they did not have the military resources in the area to do anything else. The fate of Bēl-iddina's wayward heir remains unknown, but the reports discussed above suggest that in areas where the Assyrians did not maintain a strong physical presence resistance might incubate. The periphery also gave access to bordering states that could support nascent rebellions and insurgencies.

In fact, minimal border security and slow communication encouraged fugitives from the Assyrian authorities to take refuge in neighboring polities.

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28 Literally translated the term is "mule stable man," but texts often associate this officer with the movement of deportees, which he apparently oversaw. For further discussion, Gallagher (1994) 64–5.

Šubria, an independent kingdom sandwiched between Urartian territory and two Assyrian provinces, Amedi and Tušḫan, offers a typical case in point. Throughout Sargon's reign, Šubria managed to retain its independence from Assyria and Urarṭu, though it had ties to both.[29] Several incidents reported in the correspondence reveal that deserters from the army, discontented deportees, and other fugitives frequently sought refuge in Šubria or Urarṭu. Since at least some of these men could divulge classified information or organize anti-Assyrian operations from this safe haven, the Assyrians made every effort to have them returned. On occasion Ḫu-tešub, the Šubrian king, refused extradition—a policy reversal that put the neighboring Assyrian governors, whose duty it was to retrieve runaways, in a difficult position. Diplomatic theater ensued.

Aššur-dūr-pānīya, the royal treasurer who governed one of the border provinces, became frustrated when he tried to track down a Gurrean auxiliary officer who, after murdering an Assyrian mayor, fled to Urarṭu through Šubria:[30]

> My commander of fifty, (one) of the Gurreans from Mudurna, killed the mayor of Mudurna. From whatever road he came, he did not go to do work with his brothers, (but) feared (his deed) from before, took with him 15 Gurreans, and went to Urarṭu.
>
> They came and told me (so) I sent Il-dalâ to Šubria, saying: 'Go and bring down your servants.' He went, but did he bring down his servants? I sent my messenger back to Il-dalâ, telling him: 'This commander of fifty and his men! I have scoured the whole mountain and all the passes because of him! Go in pursuit of him!' Pursuing him, he went to Šubria. The commander of fifty and his soldiers entered Marḫuḫa, a [fo]rt of the Šubrian (king). Il-dalâ saw him and ma[de a pa]ct with him: 'Go and [b]ring me the seal of the go[vernor] and [you] can go fr[ee].' My commander of fifty and 100 Marhuhaean spearmen went behind Il-dalâ and attacked him on the road. The servants of the king, my lord, were alert; nobody there got killed and they wounded the commander of fifty. They turned back and entered Marhuha. We who today organized the pursuit of the commander of fifty—they did not arrest him and hand him over (to us) but abducted the man! Once again, they are (only) bringing forth and handing over old subjects of the king, my lord, who have been squatting there (for a long time). (SAA V 53)

29 Desző (2006) 37; Radner (2012) 263–4.

30 Parker (1998) 180.

The letter's diction makes it a little hard to unravel, but the gist is that a junior officer of the Gurrean auxiliaries killed an Assyrian official and fled toward Šubria with some of his men. Aššur-dur-pānīya's deputy, Il-dalâ, eventually caught up with the fugitives, who were hiding out in a Šubrian fort. After failed negotiations, the Gurrean commander was wounded in an attack on Il-dalâ and retreated back to the fort. Šubrian officials opted not to turn over the Gurrean, but in order to avoid war, tried to placate the Assyrian officer with aging refugees of no political value.

A tribal people thought to come from Anatolia, the Gurreans formed part of the auxiliary infantry of the Assyrian standing army.[31] Whatever its motivation, this murder was bound to have political ramifications. Since both the Assyrians and Šubrians risked open war over the incident, it stands to reason that there was more at stake than the fate of a few individuals. On the contrary, the only logical reason for the Šubrians to welcome a murderer and his accomplices into their midst was for the political payoff—to pass information to the Urarṭians or to stir up trouble among the Gurrean contingent of the Assyrian army. Šubria's continued (semi-)freedom depended on Ḫu-tešub's ability to thwart Assyrian and Urarṭian ambitions in the area without prompting reprisals or allowing either side to gain too much influence. The Gurrean officer presented Ḫu-tešub with a golden opportunity to distract the Assyrians and thus bolster his own position, while the Gurrean probably understood that the only way to survive was to cash in on his crime. Although there is no evidence that the murder was a calculated act of terrorism, subsequent events show how quickly an isolated incident could become politically charged, and indeed, how great was the potential for a buffer state to support an insurgency.

Other governors experienced similar problems. Ša-Aššur-dubbu, the governor of Tušḫan, wrote to Sargon about another diplomatic crisis involving Šubria:

> I sent my two eunuchs with six soldiers and a seal[ed document] for the fugitives in Penzâ; they went with two cohort commanders and had the men brought down. They ate bread there; the brother of the Šubrian (king) also ate with them there. They went outside together and were on their way home, when the Šubrians set an ambush in front of them and captured my two eunuchs and the six soldiers. Both of my cohort commanders escaped.

31 Postgate (2000) 89–108.

> I wrote him (Ḫu-tešub): 'Release the soldiers!' but he said, 'I will ask (around); [i]f they are in my country, I shall give them back.'
>
> I [se]t out on their trail in person, but they had taken the soldiers up to his fort. (SAA V 32)

In this instance, Ša-Aššur-dubbu sent only six soldiers to accompany his officials to indicate that the mission involved a friendly state. To have sent more men would have signaled his distrust and invited Ḫu-tešub to accuse him of a diplomatic breach and thereby gain the advantage. The Šubrians had other ideas, however, and after providing hospitality and turning over the prisoners, ambushed the party as it made its way home, capturing all but two of the men. The fact that no casualties were reported on either side is typical of the delicate nature of such exchanges; every action had to be carefully calculated to achieve the desired objective without unintended consequences. When the Assyrian governor complained to Ḫu-tešub, the Šubrian feigned ignorance and casually promised to look into the matter. Despite the obvious posturing, Ḫu-tešub could easily deny knowledge of the ambush because he had neither been present at the banquet nor met the Assyrian delegation. A related letter quotes Sargon's answering instructions to "capt[ure] his (Ḫu-tešub's) men in eq[ual number] to your men, [until] he releases [them]" (SAA V 33). Since Urarṭu was likely to support Šubria if the Assyrians invaded, Sargon tried to avoid war by forcing a prisoner exchange.

On another occasion, when Ša-Aššur-dubbu complained that Ḫu-tešub had prevented Urarṭian fugitives from reaching Assyria and instead settled them in Šubria, Ḫu-tešub replied that he had acted because he "feared the gods." The subsequent arrest and return of a runaway Urarṭian mule driver to Urarṭu revealed the hypocrisy underlying this pious claim and prompted the Assyrian governor to ask accusingly, "Why are you not afraid of the gods, *abati*, calf of the Urarṭ[ian]!?" (SAA V 35). Having been caught in a lie, Ḫu-tešub attempted to mollify the Assyrian governor by promising to return "your men" (presumably those captured earlier). Eventually, the situation became so precarious in Tušḫan that Ša-Aššur-dubbu warned Sargon of impending rebellion (SAA V 33). That the Šubrian king habitually took in Assyrian fugitives for political purposes rather than for moral reasons there can be little doubt. How those refugees acted afterward is less certain, although the Assyrians rightly regarded these people as a threat.

More than thirty years later the Šubrians (and probably the Urarṭians) gave shelter to the sons of the Assyrian king, Sennacherib (704–681), after they murdered him. The next king, Esarhaddon, felt so threatened by his brothers'

continued freedom that in 673 he invaded and annexed Šubria.[32] The fate of the patri-regicidal brothers is nowhere explicitly stated, but the fact that Esarhaddon had to suppress an attempted coup a couple of years later suggests that his preemptive campaign did not have the desired effect.[33] It appears that during the late Assyrian Empire, it was commonplace for political fugitives and refugees to find safe haven in enemy territory and in some cases, to use it as a base for anti-Assyrian operations.

The evidence examined so far has proved only that the Assyrians had to deal with some of the behaviors typical of insurgents; namely, coercion and subversion of the local populace, theft, destruction of property, finding safe haven in neighboring states, and attacks on officials and soldiers. It must be stressed that plausible alternative interpretations of this material are possible.[34] We cannot establish unequivocal evidence that the Assyrians faced the type of organized insurgency that exists today, although some of their enemies employed insurgent tactics. Given the right circumstances, however, the Assyrians were capable of implementing a surprisingly sophisticated counterinsurgency-like strategy. Sargon II's re-conquest of Babylonia is a case in point.

Assyrian Counterinsurgency

By the eighth century the Assyrian army had developed a simple formula for success in conventional warfare; rapid devastation of enemy territory usually forced capitulation. Battle and siege followed as necessary. However, in areas such as Babylonia circumstances called for a more refined approach. The Assyrians had a long and complicated relationship with their southern neighbors. Among Assyria's enemies only the Babylonians spoke the same language (a different dialect of Akkadian) and shared many of the same cultural traditions. The Assyrians particularly revered Babylonia's ancient cities and temples, some of which traced their origins back "before the flood."[35] The south was not only rich in history, but by virtue of its monopoly over the Persian Gulf trade and the overland commerce with Arabia and Iran, materially affluent as well. For these reasons, Assyrian kings regarded Babylonia as a special prize and took a circumspect approach to military intervention there. If the

32 Borger (1956) 86, 102–7. The murderers are not named, but it is generally agreed that the text refers to them.

33 Notably, the author of SAA X 316 calls the conspirators *parriṣūte*. For more on the coup attempt, see Radner (2003) 165–84.

34 Dubovský (2006) 43–9.

35 Frame (2008) 21–31.

Assyrian king wanted to be accepted as a legitimate Babylonian monarch, he could hardly "destroy, devastate, and burn with fire" in the usual manner. The political situation in Babylonia toward the end of the eighth century caused additional complications.

Cultural affinities aside, the two regions developed quite differently. At this time Babylonia was not a cohesive state like Assyria, but a heterogeneous collection of ethnic groups and cities loosely united under a king based in Babylon, the seat of kingship. To speak of Babylonia as a single political entity belies the fact that during the middle decades of the eighth century, the alluvium amounted to a patchwork of politically autonomous polities and tribes with shifting alliances. These alliances were based on cordial "brotherly relations" and formal treaties. Beyond the traditional borders of Akkad, the power of the central government in Babylon seems to have been limited. Even in Akkad, Babylon's influence was circumscribed by the traditional privileges of the ancient cult centers.[36]

Most of the old, established Babylonian families dwelled in semi-independent cities, while Chaldean and Aramaean tribes occupied the countryside. Bīt-Iakin, Bīt-Amukāni, and Bīt-Dakkūri, the most powerful Chaldean tribes, generally occupied territory in central and southern Babylonia, whereas Aramaean tribes such as the Puqūdu, Itu'u, Ru'u, and Gambūlu inhabited the middle Euphrates area and the piedmont to the east of the Tigris.[37] Leading tribal families often intermarried, though kin ties did little to prevent conflict. Self-interest and competition made a pretense of loyalty and condemned alliances to the short-term, while persistent tensions, both among the cities and between the urban population and the tribes, exacerbated political fragmentation and encouraged Assyrian intervention.[38] The fact that the Babylonian king wielded limited power over city and tribal leaders, who worked assiduously toward improving their own positions, produced exactly the type of instability the Assyrians could prey upon.

In 732, for instance, a local governor took the Babylonian throne in a coup, but was in turn overthrown after barely a month by a Chaldean chief, Mukīn-zēri of Bīt-Amukāni. This chain of events provided the Assyrian king, Tiglath-pileser III, with an excuse to interfere.[39] The Assyrians did not simply attack, but exploited inter-tribal politics to "divide and conquer." For example, Balāssu

36 Cole (1996) 17.

37 See especially, Brinkman (1984); Cole (1996); Frame (2008) 32–51; Fales (2011).

38 On inter-city rivalries in Babylonia during this period, Cole (1996); and Scurlock (2012).

39 For a recent chronological reconstruction of these events, including the relevant letters, see Luukko (2012) xxvii–xxxiii.

of Bīt-Dakkūri, who was the uncle of the rebel, Mukīn-zēri, nevertheless chose to support the Assyrians with troops and supplies, while Merodach-Baladan, chief of Bīt-Iakīn, signed a treaty with Tiglath-pileser that would have important ramifications later.[40] By putting local leaders under sworn obligation to him, Tiglath-pileser not only acquired military and logistical support for the war, he established Assyria's moral authority over its treaty partners, at least for the immediate future. Should the signatories attempt to free themselves from Assyrian rule, they would thereby put themselves in the wrong and give the Assyrians the pretext to wage "just" war against them. This type of moral-political maneuvering was standard practice throughout the Near East.

Native support allowed Tiglath-pileser to wage a largely bloodless campaign and afterwards be accepted as a legitimate Babylonian king. The Assyrians ruled the south unopposed until 721 when Sargon's irregular accession gave the Assyrians' erstwhile ally, Merodach-Baladan, the opportunity to depose their administration and seize power in Babylon. Throughout the proceedings, Balāssu remained loyal to Assyria. In 720, Sargon attempted to counter the uprising, but after an indecisive battle against Merodach-Baladan's Elamite allies at Der, the Assyrian king accepted the *status quo* to await a better opportunity at some future time. Sargon put the years of stalemate to good use, systematically securing his flanks and rear until he could fully focus his military efforts on regaining Babylonia. His compulsion to rule the south was not simply the product of royal vanity; from the Assyrian point of view, Merodach-Baladan was a rebel and a traitor, who had to be punished for breaking the treaty established earlier with Tiglath-pileser III. By contrast, Merodach-Baladan probably reasoned that he was free from obligation because the treaty had become void after Tiglath-pileser's death. In this way, both sides claimed the moral high ground.

When Sargon turned his attention to Babylonia again in 710, he faced a familiar dilemma: how to defeat the enemy without inadvertently alienating people. Taking a cue from his father, Sargon's strategy involved a calculated mix of force and persuasion. Unable for political reasons to unleash Assyria's unparalleled military strength, Sargon chose to restrict standard operations to the frontier between Babylonia and Elam, while he took a covert approach to the conquest of the Babylonian heartland. Although Babylonian disunity gave Sargon some advantage, it also meant that he had to deal piecemeal with each tribal chief and city lord. From a military standpoint, a conventional invasion entailed too much risk: the Assyrians did not want to get mired in a war of

40 For Balāssu, SAA XIX 111 and 135–37. For the Assyrian treaty with Merodach-Baladan, SAA XIX 133 and Luukko (2012) xxxix–xl.

attrition, nor could they afford to waste political capital by inflicting too much damage.

Sargon responded to the situation with tripartite strategy similar to Tiglath-pileser's earlier one. First, the Assyrians would launch a conventional campaign on Babylonia's eastern frontier to cow the Elamites, reduce the military effectiveness of allied tribes in the area, and isolate Bīt-Iakin.[41] As the main army campaigned in the east, smaller contingents stationed in Assyrian-held territory in northern Babylonia would monitor Merodach-Baladan's movements, interfere with his operations as much as possible, and provide security to Assyria's supporters. The most important part of the plan would take place in the heart of Babylonia, where Sargon's agents would attempt to win over the tribes and coerce or encourage high officials in the cities to lend their support. In essence, the Assyrians recognized what David Galula pointed out in his classic work on counterinsurgency: namely, that in such situations "*politics becomes an active instrument of operation.* And so intricate is the interplay between the political and the military actions that they cannot be tidily separated; on the contrary, every military move has to be weighed with regard to its political effects, and vice versa."[42] And if there was one thing that everyone in the ancient Near East understood it was the value of political maneuver. It is true that, strictly speaking, Merodach-Baladan was a "state actor" and therefore, a rebel rather than an insurgent; however, the Assyrian response to his regime mirrors modern counterinsurgency strategies in important ways.

Well ahead of the campaign, Sargon recruited Babylonians, Aramaeans, and Chaldeans living in Assyria to go into Babylonia and subvert support for Merodach-Baladan. When the Chaldean took power in 722, some who opposed him were killed or imprisoned, while others fled to Assyria, hoping one day to return to their homeland. By 715, a sizeable number of Chaldeans formed an auxiliary unit in Assyria's standing army and other refugees had settled in the provinces.[43] The Assyrians had access to a large pool of willing exiles and previously deported prisoners from which to recruit *agent provocateurs* to gather intelligence and win over their former countrymen. Once these men had suborned Merodach-Baladan's followers, the army could take over with minimal human cost or property damage. Sargon's strategy, much like Tiglath-pileser's, made excellent use of his pre-existing diplomatic relationships, intelligence assets, and military capability, while exploiting the enemy's weakness. The Assyrians offered safe haven to fugitives from Babylonia just as the Šubrians

41 Potts (1999) 265.

42 Galula (1964) 9.

43 Dalley and Postgate (1983) 35.

had done on a much smaller scale for Assyrian runaways. When victory had been achieved, the native agents and supporters—nearly all people with some prior claim to prominence—would be rewarded with positions of authority, land, and renewed prestige.

In 710 during the first phase of the campaign, the Assyrians attempted to entice the Aramaean tribes east of the Tigris to support them.[44] If successful, the endeavor would not only save lives, but also time and effort. A letter from the governor of Arrapḫa province to Sargon describes an attempt to win over the Ru'ueans occupying the lands between the Tigris and Uqnû Rivers:

> Nabû-zēru-ibni, the Ru'[uean] eunuch whom the king, my lord, retur[ned] from Damascus from the prese[nce] of Bēl-dūri and sent to Abdūdu to the presence of Bē[l....] so that perhaps the Ru'u[ean] and his people would co[me] to him—Merodach-Bal[adan] heard of his coming (and) had all of his brothers brought (before him) and spoke with them, saying 'Now that his brother has come, you will run aw[ay] to him!' They said to him 'Why would we run away? Our brother who has come is on the other side. He came, but he will go back again.' (SAA XV 1)

The effort involved in this small operation attests to the reach of Assyria's bureaucratic system, which could keep track of a Ru'uean eunuch serving in Damascus.[45] By sending someone well known to the local people, the Assyrians could more effectively deliver their message. In return, they offered the eunuch the opportunity to improve his position. Sargon's attempt to win over the Ru'ueans failed at this early stage because no one could be sure which king would ultimately triumph and because Merodach-Baladan's proximity to the Ru'ueans made him the more immediate threat.

In the meantime, the Assyrian army marched south from Der to take control of the tribal lands of Rāši, Iadburu, Puqūdu, Gambūlu and parts of Bīt-Iakin on the Elamite-Babylonian frontier.[46] In this area of operations on the periphery of urbanized Babylonia, the Assyrians employed their routine devastation tactics to great effect, burning, looting, and taking prisoners. Merodach-Baladan made a half-hearted attempt to defend one of the area's key towns by reinforcing its fortifications, but his response proved ineffective and the Assyrians captured the place in a day (*ISK* Ann. 266–269). Sargon's success on this front kept

44 The chronology of the campaign given here is derived from Fuchs (1994) 400–5; Dubovský (2006) 168–88; and especially Fuchs (2001) xiv–xxiii.

45 See also Dubovský (2006) 169; Fuchs (2001) xviii.

46 For the political geography of the area, Brinkman (1986) 199–208.

the Elamites from entering the war and inspired eight leaders of the Gambūlu tribe to surrender (*ISK* Ann. 271–94). Unable to engage the main Assyrian army in battle but needing to do something, Merodach-Baladan moved his forces west to strike at the smaller Assyrian contingents operating in northern Babylonia. He sent his cavalry to raid the area around Dūr-Kurigalzu and Dūr-Šarrukku, Assyrian-held fortress towns located about twenty miles apart (SAA *XV* 164).[47] After an informer (possibly a traitorous Assyrian official) assured Merodach-Baladan that, due to a water shortage in Dūr-Šarrukku, he could take the fort quickly if he attacked immediately, the Chaldean started marching north (SAA XV 189).[48] As he did so, Assyrian agents reported his every move to Sargon (SAA XV 155, 156, 188, 189 and SAA XVII 22). In central Babylonia the opposing sides were more or less evenly matched at this point, and with the outcome of the struggle still very much in question, most tribal and city leaders preferred not to commit to either one. Local leaders understood that although Sargon had the better army, he had to be careful how he used it, while Merodach-Baladan could only retain the throne if he mustered sufficient support, especially from Elam. Since Sargon's strategy relied on turning the tribes against Merodach-Baladan, protecting new supporters was a priority.

The Chaldean tribe, Bīt-Dakkūri, whose lands lay close to Babylon, played a particularly important role in this regard. Dakkurian support would give Sargon a secure base from which to approach the capital. Well aware of the area's strategic significance and the importance of intelligence, the Assyrians took care to cultivate informants within Bīt-Dakkūri and Babylon itself. The flow of information from these people was crucial, if not always accurate. For example, Bēl-iqīša, a temple prelate in Babylon, reported anxiously to Sargon about recent developments:

> Now, after the delegates of Bīt-Dakkūri all together wrote to Merodach-Baladan and the *šandabakku* (governor of Nippur) together with Nabû-le'i, the governor, and the troops of Bīt-Iakin marched with them to (Bāb)-Bitqi and the prefect turned the horsemen (literally grooms) of Bīt-Dakkūri, the Arameans, and the men of Bīt-Dakkūri against him (Merodach-Baladan), the delegates have been silent, as they have become afraid. The others there, having heard, have turned back. And now the leading men, who do not secure the land, whose words the king has heard, after going out, are constantly sending deceitful messages and

47 Postgate and Matilla (2004).

48 On the possibility that an Assyrian gave the information to Merodach-Baladan, Fuchs (2001) xix.

> strengthening their cities. The king should not wait for the result. May the troops come to Bāb-Bitqa!
>
> (*omitted content*)
>
> I have written to the king because it is critical! The king should not delay, for we are now divided, and your servants and the land of Akkad (Babylonia) threaten to slip from your hand. (SAA XVII 22)

The agitated letter underscores how unstable the situation in Babylonia seemed to the participants during the first months of the campaign. While the Babylonian governor of Bīt-Dakkūri and others marched with Merodach-Baladan's troops toward the Tigris River crossing at Bāb-Bitqi on their way to attack Dūr-Šarruku, the pro-Assyrian prefect convinced the Aramaeans in the area and the Dakkurean horsemen to support Sargon.[49] Upon hearing this news, the pro-Babylonian delegates, who were unsure how to proceed, withdrew to Bīt-Dakkūri. Similarly irresolute, other area leaders prepared to receive attacks from both sides. In actuality, Bēl-iqīša's concerns were unfounded and events were unfolding according to Sargon's plan. With the situation behind him in Bīt-Dakkūri deteriorating rapidly, Merodach-Baladan aborted the mission to take Dūr-Šarrukku and retreated to Babylon, apparently unaware of the highly placed traitor there.

Increasingly skeptical of Merodach-Baladan's chances, city and tribal leaders began to join the Assyrians voluntarily. On one occasion, for example, a man approached Sargon's deputy in northern Babylonia, Il-yada', who duly reported to the king:

> They call [him] Ṣalâ-il. He is the one of them [xxx] who is convincing them, saying: '[…] Let us gat[her] and go to Il-yada'.' One among [his] broth[ers] went to Babylon into the presence of the son of I[akin] (Merodach-Baladan), saying 'The men have set their faces to[wards Assyria]'
>
> (*break in text*)
>
> … thus, [he is] in the city Anat of […] He went and inspected the city, […], returned and dw[elt] with his brothers, the [….] along the Diyala River. He has se[nt] his messengers to the Tu'man[eans] who live in the Ḫatalla tribe, saying: 'The king, my lord, is coming out to my house. As for you, proceed and [come] before me!' (SAA XV 157)

49 The exact location of Bāb-Bitqi is unknown, but appears to have been in the vicinity of Opis. Fuchs (2001) xvii.

Although the war occasionally caused divided loyalties, in general, the better-organized communities did not dissolve into factions but made collective decisions about which side they would support.[50] Once Merodach-Baladan's power base began to erode, there was little he could do to stem the tide. More and more people wanted to negotiate a favorable future with Assyria, which they now assumed would be victorious. In another case, an official (possibly Il-yada' himself) sent a potential new supporter to the king with the advice that Sargon "should speak kind words to him, and the king, my lord, should encourage him so he will go and transmit the kind words to the people of his country and his brothers" (SAA XV 159).[51] For pragmatic local leaders the choice became obvious; the Assyrians could protect their interests and Merodach-Baladan could not. In short order the leaders of Sippar, one of the most important cities in northern Babylonia, invited the Assyrians into the city (SAA XV 158 and 159).

This is not to say that Merodach-Baladan did not continue his efforts to unite people against the Assyrians. Like many later insurgents, Merodach-Baladan tried to rectify military deficiencies by establishing allies through persuasion and coercion, and by exploiting tribal factionalism. Several letters attest that where one group sided with the Assyrians another would back Merodach-Baladan. For example, when the city Darati (location unknown) was still in the Chaldean's hands, some of its inhabitants wrote to the Assyrians offering to let them in through a tunnel (SAA XV 199). Just like the Assyrians, Merodach-Baladan ran spies and subverted enemy officials. It is even possible that an Assyrian told him about the alleged water shortage in Dūr-Šarrukku (SAA XV 189).[52]

However, as Sargon maintained the initiative, additional diplomatic successes allowed him to expand his military presence in central Babylonia by setting up a camp in the ruined fortress Dūr-Ladīni, whose location within a dozen miles of Babylon offered the dual advantage of threatening Merodach-Baladan and protecting the tribal lands of Bīt-Dakkūri (SAA XV 177, 178, 245). When an Assyrian detachment arrived in their territory, the people of Bīt-Dakkūri became more confident, especially after the return of their exiled

50 Fuchs (2001) xix.

51 Although the greeting is missing, this letter can be attributed to Il-yada' on orthographic grounds.

52 Fuchs (2001) xix.

leaders (SAA XVII 75).[53] One of these, a woman named Barsipītu, informed the king:[54]

> Under the protection of the gods of [the king, our lord], we entered Bīt-[Dakkūri] in good health. Ana-Na[bû-taklāk] (the Assyrian delegate) and the entire population of Bīt-Dakkūri rejoiced in our presence, and they constantly bless the king our lord, saying 'now we know that the [king] our lord has reestablished Bīt-Dakkūri and will give it the advantage, as he has sent us the son of our lord! And we shall be living under the protection of the king, our lord, forever.' (SAA XVII 73)

Barsipītu was probably the daughter of Balāssu, the former ruler of Borsippa who had gone into exile in Assyria earlier.[55] She and her brother (mentioned in the letter) returned to their native country as pro-Assyrian emissaries, while their father remained with the Assyrians as surety for their continued loyalty.[56] The loss of Bīt-Dakkūri and the approach of the Assyrian army forced Merodach-Baladan to leave Babylon, join his army in Kish, and then make his way east in hopes of procuring Elamite aid (*ISK* Ann. 307–309).[57] The fact that Merodach-Baladan could travel unopposed in Iadburu so soon after Sargon campaigned there, indicates that the Assyrians had not fully garrisoned the area, but had simply passed through in order to make allies and warn off the Elamites. This turn of events also suggests that many (if not most) of the people living in Babylonia did not feel loyal to either side and were prepared to change allegiance as often as necessary for survival.

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53 SAA XVII 75 refers to unrest in Borsippa. Dietrich (2003) xxv, dates the letter to 710 on the grounds that it mentions Nabu-le'i, who was the governor of Borsippa under Merodach-Baladan. Baker (2001) 872, dates the letter to Esarhaddon's reign (680–669).

54 On the date of the letter, Dietrich (2003) xviii.

55 In SAA XIX 133 Balāssu is quoted as begging to be deported, though the request could be rhetorical. SAA I 1 may refer to Balāssu. If the restoration is correct, then at some point (the date of the letter is uncertain) he was given the option of moving from Quwê (Cilicia) north into Tabal (Cappadocia).

56 Dietrich (2003) xxv. Barsipītu is mentioned in only one other letter, SAA XVII 68, but may also appear in SAA 6 96, a dated legal document recording her purchase of four slaves in Nineveh in 695.

57 See also, SAA XVII 10, in which an official reports that Merodach-Baladan has left Babylon and gone to Dūr-Iakin. For more on Merodach-Baladan's relationship with the Elamites, see Brinkman (1965).

In fact, the situation encouraged callous opportunism. For example, one unscrupulous Chaldean offered his loyalty to Sargon in exchange for "my people—as many as I can take possession of" (SAA XV 216). In such cases, personal ambition overcame collective interest and signaled the disintegration of central and tribal authority.[58] Though this state of affairs hurt Merodach-Baladan's chances severely, it was at best a mixed blessing for the Assyrians, who had to deal with rising factionalism and unreliable converts. Nonetheless, an Assyrian victory looked certain enough that Sargon made no attempt to engage his enemy's retreating forces. Battle became unnecessary when the Elamite king refused to help Merodach-Baladan, whose only option now was to retreat to his base at Dūr-Iakin and prepare to make a stand. Back in Babylon "members of the nobility, (and) friends who are devoted to the king and the vizier" began publically to accept Sargon. In order to justify their disloyalty, they claimed that the god Marduk had ordered Merodach-Baladan ousted from Babylon in favor of Sargon (SAA XVII 20). Shortly thereafter, they invited the Assyrian king to enter the city and take the throne. In just a few months, the Assyrians had taken greater Babylonia without doing damage to any major city or fighting a pitched battle, because they were able to effect what amounted to a successful counterinsurgency strategy.

Despite the success, there was still mopping up to do; Merodach-Baladan remained at large and some of the Aramaean and Chaldean tribes in the east had yet to be thoroughly pacified. Indeed, the letters from this period describe incidents of lawlessness and sabotage in areas where Assyrian influence was still weak. For example, one official preparing to travel south to pro-Assyrian Uruk, expressed safety concerns:

> [The boa]tmen [spo]ke to me thus: 'Are we to go as he commands? The [ar]ea is not safe; there are *parriṣūte* w[ho ...] there. Surely [.... will] hear [about it and] send [... who will c]onfiscate the boats from us [....]. Let us wait [fo]r the king, my lord.' (SAA XV 2)

Reluctant to make the trip on account of insurgent activity, the official sought to accompany Sargon and thereby gain the safety of the royal escort. At that time Uruk was located within the orbit of Iakinite/Amukanian influence. In fact, as Merodach-Baladan retreated to his home territory, he evacuated other southern towns and forced the inhabitants to help improve the defenses of Dūr-Iakin in anticipation of a siege (*ISK* Ann. 330–341). That the Assyrians should meet guerrilla-style resistance in this area is, therefore, not surprising.

58 Fuchs (2001) xix–xx.

Another missive from a group of tribal leaders in the vicinity of the Tubliaš River begs Sargon to send troops because "there is talk that people are rising up in great numbers" (SAA 17 150). A second appeal includes greater detail:

> They cut off the water between us and the land of Rāšu. Nobody from Rāšu has c[ome] to you. However, I have spoken with the leaders of [TN], of Dummuqu, and of [TN]. All of them are servant[s of the king, my lord]. They have sent their messages to the king, my lord, with my [messen]ger. It cannot be put off to the future! May troops reach us quickly that I may turn the whole country and give it back to the king, my lord . . .
>
> [Abi-i]aqar, the Pu[qu]dean (leader), does not want the well-being of the land in the king's presence; he seeks revenge. The deadline that he set he has (now) changed. Encouraging poverty and robbery, he (wants) to take booty for himself. He does not wish for the clasping of hands . . . Now the whole country has raised its hand toward the king. May the army come and take its hand! (SAA XVII 152)

The fort, Šama'unu, which Sargon had captured at the start of the campaign, no longer had enough soldiers or resources to mount a defense and someone—the letter does not identify the culprit—had tampered with the water supply coming from the Zagros foothills in Rāšu. One leader of the Puqūdu tribe, which had recently surrendered to Sargon, was fomenting lawlessness and political discord, while a few tribal leaders in the area remained loyal to Assyria. As Sargon could deliver the required support and enough tribal leaders saw advantage in siding with him, the pacification of Babylonia moved inexorably forward.

It took two more years to complete the victory. After the protracted siege of Dūr-Iakin had reached a stalemate, Sargon negotiated the city's surrender and allowed Merodach-Baladan to go into exile in neighboring Elam with his retinue (*ISK* Ann. 357–59). The Assyrians burned Dūr-Iakin to the ground and dismantled the ruins. Overall, the Assyrians had conducted a remarkably efficient, patient, and restrained campaign. Past experience, a solid grasp of military and political circumstances, and useful intelligence allowed them to develop a highly successful and flexible strategy. Whether or not Merodach-Baladan fits the modern definition of an insurgent, the strategy used to defeat him has much in common with modern counterinsurgency practices. From the Assyrian point of view, however, the war ended an illegitimate rebellion and restored the four quarters of the world to order under the sage rule of an Assyrian king, and that is how they chose to record it.

Typically reductive, Sargon's inscriptions make no mention of covert activities and political maneuvering, but in keeping with the requirements of the genre place the emphasis on the outcome—in this case, the final, climactic confrontation at Dūr-Iakin:

> Twelve years, against the will of the gods, he (Merodach-Baladan) ruled over and administered Babylon, the city of Enlil and the gods. At the command of Aššur, father of the gods, and the great lord Marduk, I got my (chariot) team ready, organized my camp and ordered the advance against Chaldea, the brazen enemy. That one, Merodach-Baladan, heard of the coming of my campaign and panic for himself befell him. From Babylon to Iqbi-Bēl, he fled like a bat in the night. His cities, inhabitants and the gods who dwell in them, he gathered as one and made them enter Dūr-Iakin, and he strengthened its enclosure wall. The people of the tribes Gambūlu, Puqūdu, Damūnu, Ru'ua and Ḫindaru he made his auxiliary forces and made them enter and (so) he made battle preparations.... (a description of the defenses is included here).... I sent my warriors over his ditches like eagles and they accomplished his defeat. With the blood of his soldiers they dyed the water of his canals red like red wool ... (Sargon captures the city and lists plunder) ... Dūr-Iakin, his strong city, I burned with fire, I demolished, I destroyed its enclosure wall. I tore out its foundation and I made it become like a mound (left after) a flood. (*ISK* Prunk.120–137; Translation Melville (2006) 341)

Other versions differ in detail, but not one includes the type of activity that the letters chronicle.[59] One cannot help wondering how many of the Assyrian campaigns that are known only from hyperbolic, self-celebratory royal inscriptions actually had an important political/clandestine component that has gone unrecognized as a result. Without new letter archives we will never know, but it is worth keeping in mind that the relentlessly triumphant royal annals tell only part of the story. Just because they eschew any mention of irregular warfare does not mean it never occurred.

Conclusion

Without doubt, the Assyrians faced widespread resistance during the reign of Sargon II, and while the modern term insurgency may not perfectly

59 For example, *ISK* Ann. 255–380.

correspond to what the ancient texts describe, we have gained new knowledge from looking at events through its lens. It is clear now that Assyria's opponents sometimes employed standard insurgent tactics such as robbery, brigandage, spying, coercion and subversion of civilians, solicitation of external support, sabotage, and perhaps terrorism. The Assyrians responded with equally familiar counterinsurgency operations: they provided security to civilians; gathered intelligence; took care not to antagonize subjects more than necessary, and attempted to forge strong political relationships to counteract the opposition. Then, as now, people met the demands of political strife and warfare in predictable, rational ways appropriate to their capabilities and in line with their cultural expectations, which in turn influenced how they recorded their experiences.

After recognizing that the royal inscriptions limited their military coverage to conventional warfare, we have demonstrated that the vernacular term *parriṣu*, which does not appear in royal inscriptions, can frequently be associated with political resistance and unconventional warfare, and consequently that "insurgent" should be added to that word's available meanings. Previously, scholars have missed this interpretation because they accepted without question the Assyrians' conflation of criminal acts and political resistance. Further exploration of the vocabulary of violence in royal inscriptions and epistolary texts may enhance our understanding of war and society during the Neo-Assyrian period. Out of this study a clearer picture has emerged of resistance driven by self-interest, rather than by religion or ideology, and of the Assyrians' sophisticated approach to governance.

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CHAPTER 4

Fourth Century Revolts against Persia: The Test Case of Sidon (348–345 BCE)

Josef Wiesehöfer

In 348/7, the Persian king Artaxerxes III was confronted with a new threat: the Phoenician city-kingdom of Sidon, an essential naval and army rallying point in the West, had raised an insurgency against his rule. Artaxerxes was no stranger to such revolts and had experienced both success and failures on this front: after his accession to the throne 11 years before he had been able to force ambitious provincial governors into line, but had, in 351, himself been humiliated militarily by the Egyptians, who had continued a successful insurgency against the Great King, for which Artaxerxes still sought revenge. Consequently, since we have evidence for other "revolts," both successful and less so, why is the Sidonian uprising, which lasted little more than two or three years, a good "test case" to understand Persian responses to "insurgency and terror"? Three reasons emerge.

First, there is the content-related reason. The Sidonian Rebellion fits the standard definition of an insurgency: it is a rebellion against a recognized government[1]—Sidon had recognized Artaxerxes II's and his son Artaxerxes III's authority as Great King.[2] The Sidonian insurgency also binds together the fourth century histories of the Persian Empire, Egypt and Hellas and so offers a unique window into their interaction and responses to an insurgent movement. Additionally, the sources seem to reflect, at first sight, not only the reasons for the rebellion *and* the motives of the rebels and their allies, but even the means the Great King used to be successful—i.e., state terror. Although the subject of much debate concerning their accuracy, the literary sources seem to report on the actions of the Iranian authorities before the uprising, the reasons for the failure of the insurgency on the part of the Sidonians, the harsh

1 See Brice, chapter one, for a discussion of definitions and characteristics of insurgency. All dates BCE unless otherwise indicated.

2 At the very least the sparse evidence suggests that Sidon behaved as a loyal subject, see Briant (2002) 651, 664–5.

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form of the Royal crackdown (state terror), and the impact of the uprising on the region in the decades that followed the insurgency's suppression. However, since no scholarly consensus on all these issues has been reached so far, not least with regard to what Persian retaliatory measures looked like and how they are to be explained, the precision offered by applying the terminology of insurgency and terrorism can bring a necessary clarity to Persian policy that literary studies alone have failed to provide.

Second, there is the socio-political reason. For a long time, rebellion against Persia has been designated and characterized as a symptom of the decline of the Persian Empire in the fourth century. Although this interpretation is now generally rejected, few scholars are even interested these days in exploring the relationship between revolt and the nature of (and responses to) Persian rule. But the Sidonian revolt and its suppression *does* allow us an important opportunity to analyze the connections between the structures and institutions of the Persian Empire, the motives of individuals and groups, and the situational developments of the 340s. Moreover, using the Sidonian Revolt of 348 as a test case allows for the creation of a base of comparison with which we might examine other "insurgencies" against the Great Kings and Achaemenid Royal responses to them. Indeed, once we have conducted a critical study of this (fairly) well-evidenced event, we can begin to ask questions about how singular or typical the Sidonian insurgency was and how its suppression fits within the wider history of the Persian Empire. Understanding Sidon and Artaxerxes' approach to it, allows us to lay the framework for asking "big" questions like, do the quantity of rebellions and the forms of state terror in response really separate Assyrians and Persians, as has been previously assumed, or were they similar?

The third and final reason to study the Sidonian Revolt is a methodological one that in certain ways overlaps with the other two. The main literary source for Persian policy during this period is external to the Empire—Greek—but does not exist in its original form, surviving only second hand, as a source for the universal history of Diodorus Siculus, a first century Roman historian. What does it mean that only a secondary, not contemporary, and at the same time foreign and anti-Persian view of events has been handed down to us, a view that is at the same time not identical with the point of view of the defeated Sidonians? This question has overwhelmingly dominated the conversation (more on this below) and perhaps distracted us from looking closely at events and individuals. Using the focus offered by the insurgency methodology allows us to move beyond these questions and re-center the analysis on the Revolt, its characteristics and the Great King's policy.

Centering Insurgency

Revolts against the Persian kings in the fourth century were considered in earlier research as symptoms of a decline of Persian power in that same century, and this decline was often attached not only to political and military events and developments or structural problems of Persian domination but also to characterological deficits of the protagonists or even the "Persian people" on the whole (the so-called "Persian decadence" which is so evident in our Greek and Roman literary sources).[3] As symptoms of the first type, scholars considered the loss of Egypt at the turn of the fifth and fourth century, and, in general, an inability of the Persian Great Kings to preserve the unity of the Empire and to prevent separatist tendencies. They also quoted conflicts in the royal house regarding throne, power and prestige, tensions between the kings and increasingly powerful satraps and the resulting loss of combat strength among units drawn from the Empire, as well as an increasing royal dependency on the military achievements of Greek mercenaries. Finally, scholars talked about economic stagnation due to massive hoarding of precious metal resources, exhaustion of the soil, excessive tax pressure, and, as a consequence of all this, a heightening of social disparities.[4]

These social declines were often linked to a decline of the Persian educational system, on which both women and eunuchs were said to have had an impact. Eunuchs and women generally were seen to have gained an increasingly negative influence at the royal court that then (allegedly) engendered a culture of favoritism, unreliability of bonds, intrigue, luxury addiction, and violence.[5] At certain times and not only within German scholarship, racial-genetic explanations for the decline were also given, reasons that often enough emphasized the malign influence of the Semitic Orient on the Aryan Persians.[6] It is not surprising, then, that in such statements character studies of protagonists, such as Artaxerxes II and III, Darius III, Bagoas the Eunuch, or royal women such as Parysatis and Stateira, played an important role, although, interestingly, judgments on their activities and performance could turn out differently.[7]

In the last few decades, however, scholars have increasingly recognized the dependence of such judgments on the Greek sources, which, until recently,

3 See review of literature in Wiesehöfer (2007); (2013b).

4 See Jursa (2014) for further discussion.

5 Briant (1989); Wiesehöfer (2007).

6 Wiesehöfer (1990); Bichler (2009); (2010).

7 For the image of the last Achaemenid kings (Artaxerxes II and III, Darius III) in the sources and research, see Briant (2015).

had often been uncritically identified as testimonies of real historical-political or social and economic developments and not been analysed with regard to their historical, literary, or philosophical context, the intention of their authors or commissioners, and their genre affiliation. Furthermore, it has become increasingly clear to what extent convictions of the scholars themselves had determined their interpretations, to what degree concepts and theoretical assumptions such as Oriental despotism, the alleged stagnation of oriental economies, and biological determinism of human skills and characteristics had influenced the explanation and evaluation of the end of the Achaemenid dynasty.[8]

Ultimately, all this has led to a paradigmatic shift in research on the Persian Empire: The Greek sources are now examined increasingly less on their value as testimonies for phenomena of the history of events and political structures—even if this remains important. Rather, scholarship focuses on their relevance to the history of ancient mental and intellectual debates on "foreigners," i.e., as—equally real—statements of "foreign" contemporaries (or non-contemporaries) on a "barbaric" act or institution. At the same time, scholars have increasingly turned—on the basis of more inter- and trans-disciplinary research—to the indigenous source material and tried to embed it into larger (Ancient Near Eastern) strands of tradition. Consequently, the Persian Empire itself has indeed been recognized as a part of Ancient Near Eastern history, its "Nachleben" as part of the pre-Islamic history of the Middle East.[9] This has also opened up opportunities to grant broader space to approaches of global or entangled history, since, e.g., Alexander, in his advance towards the East, was no longer perceived as facilitating "the opening of the world," but rather as heavily relying on institutions, knowledge and traditions that led back to Persian or even more ancient times.[10] Besides, it has become increasingly clear that the so-called Greek miracle is not comprehensible in itself, but only in the context of a longer intellectual Eurasian history.

As for our topic, the insurgencies against Persia in the fourth century, the same new approach is strongly recommended, and has indeed already been undertaken. However, this does not relieve us of the task to look for new explanations and answers where older ones are no longer, or not yet, convincing.

8 The series *Classica et Orientalia* (Wiesbaden) is devoted to such questions. In our context, the following volumes are important: Wiesehöfer/Rollinger/Lanfranchi (2011); Jacobs/Rollinger (2010); Madreiter (2012). But see also: Wiesehöfer (2013a); Tuplin (2014); Lenfant (2014).

9 See most recently Rollinger (2014); Wiesehöfer (in press a); Wiesehöfer (in press b).

10 Briant (2002).

This will be tried in the following case study, the revolt of the city of Sidon in the middle of the fourth century. With regards to the anti-Persian rebellions of the fourth century on the whole, the following methodological and historical insights of recent research must be remembered: a) the evaluation of these revolts depends to no small degree on the judgment of our literary sources, who being foreign, predominantly Greek, and at least partly (as they have come down to us) non-contemporary and often hostile to the Persians, criticize the state of the empire from outside and by their own respective standards—unfortunately, the numerous Greek "helpers" and wards of the Great King remain almost invisible in the written testimony;[11] b) apart from the loss of Egypt for 60 years, the Persian Empire never entered a state of existential crisis before Alexander,[12] and, before Alexander, all attempts from outside to shake off the rule of the Achaemenids were unsuccessful;[13] and c) we cannot identify any serious economic crisis—objects and ideas were moving across wide spaces and were in many cases imitated or varied and re-evaluated at their final destination or en route.[14] The combination of strict supervision and granted autonomy proved highly effective, and despite the existence of an Iranian "éthno-classe dominante,"[15] no policy of Iranization was needed to safeguard the empire's unity. There developed, without any active propagation from the center, an aristocratic and elitist *koine* of lifestyle and legitimation of rule (even beyond the borders of the empire, like in Macedonia), and during these decades the Great King was often enough acknowledged, even outside his realm, as a fascinating enemy, political patron, and ally, all at the same time.[16]

The example of the revolt of the city of Sidon, as will be seen, helps bring these observations into sharper focus. At the same time, however, it reveals once again the methodological and content-related difficulties when we try to reconstruct the history of the fourth century: the inadequacy of the sources as well as the problems of dating events, the difficulties in detecting the causes of

11 For basic considerations on the sources, see Wiesehöfer (2013b).

12 There were, mostly related to royal succession and ambitions of quasi-dynastic provincial governors, systemic political problems, but these never grew into an imperial crisis. The rule of the Achaemenid dynasty remained undisputed, actors in the provinces negotiated self-centered rather than cooperative settlements (cf. the so-called Great Satraps' Revolt, Weiskopf (1989); cf. Debord (1999) 302–66.

13 Wiesehöfer (2007).

14 Jursa (2014).

15 Briant (1989).

16 Jacobs (2014); Müller (2014).

developments and the motives of protagonists as well as the determination of the effects of the uprising itself.

Phoenicia and Persia

Before dealing with the rebellion in Phoenicia, a few words have to be said about the strategic importance of the region and about the history of an area that had for millennia been intimately connected with that of Egypt and Syria.[17] As with the city-states on Cyprus, every ruler of Mesopotamia and Iran who wanted to take possession of Egypt was forced to control or otherwise manipulate the cities of Phoenicia. This need arose, in part, from the geography of the region, because Phoenician ships and their crews and the ports of the Levantine coast were as indispensable for any attack on the land of the Nile as the cities were military rallying points. Cambyses had already known about this necessity in his 525 campaign against Egypt, and Artaxerxes III firmly counted with Phoenician support in his attempts to regain Egypt for the empire.

When we speak of Phoenicia, we should not overlook the fact that this inclusive term is a foreign (Greek) one. It makes us forget often enough, that a jointly acting Phoenicia was only the exception to the rule, that in many cases rivalries between cities (and their city-kings), similar to Cyprus, determined the course of events, and that even in the cities themselves, again similar to Hellas and Cyprus, various factions normally expressed a variety of domestic and foreign policy strategies. On the other hand, Phoenician cities had almost always been on the side of the Persians since their incorporation into the Achaemenid Empire. It is only from the defection of Egypt onwards that we hear of anti-Persian aspirations in this region, and this is surely due to the fact that only now was there an alternative power in the south that could rival the Great King and thus give the Phoenician city-kings hopes for a quasi-independence gained by playing both sides against each other.

The proximity of Phoenicians and Persians had, e.g., brought the older research on Cyprus into thinking that the freedom-loving "Greek" cities on the island had constantly been forced to fight against a coalition of the Great King and Phoenician cities of the island and the mainland. This view has long been exposed as a caricature, partly with regard to a history of events that was highly determined by rivalries between cities and city-kings, partly by referring to the multiculturalism and the socio-political situation in the individual Cypriot cities. These conditions do not exclude ethnicity as a political factor, but we

17 See, e.g., Elayi (2013) and the contributions in Steiner and Killebrew (2014).

now normally conceive it as an ideological rather than causal element for the conflicts on the island.[18] Although we still lack a detailed cultural-historical monograph on Phoenicia under Persian rule,[19] it has already become clear that the visual arts there had a pronounced cosmopolitan character that defies easy categorization.[20]

The Sidonian Insurgency

Our knowledge of the Sidonian insurgency is almost exclusively based on the report of Diodorus Siculus (16.40ff.) that is itself, at best, an epitome of Ephorus' work, at worst a pastiche of lost sources only to be guessed at. Only recently have scholars begun to define the boundaries of this work, and with the help of selected examples from the Greek (and Greek-Oriental) histories of the fifth and fourth centuries, they have been able to show which important additional information Diodorus' literary sources may have contained, that he unfortunately did not pass on.[21] As for the history of Sidon under Persian rule, we have seen several re-evaluations of the political and economic role of the city, on the basis of available source material of all kinds, as well as work on the comparative histories of Phoenician cities (e.g., Sidon and Byblos). Current work has shown Sidon to have been powerful and rich, expansionist and highly involved in the political manoeuvrings of the Great Kings.[22] And while it is still difficult to determine the role of the political institutions in the city, not least the relationship between the city-king, the magistrates and the collective bodies, there seems to have been a process of the decentralization and collectivization of power in the centuries before Alexander's conquests.[23]

With this context in mind, let us now review the elements of the Sidonian uprising:[24] After the failed Persian Egyptian Campaign of 351/0, which Artaxerxes III himself had led (Isocr. *Phil.* 101; Dem. 15.3,11–12),[25] both sides prepared for a renewed military engagement. To this end, the Great King

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18 See recently Wiesehöfer (2011) (with the older literature).

19 This is true despite the commendable works of Elayi (2013); Jigoulov (2010); and others.

20 This was rightfully stated by Nitschke (2007).

21 Tuplin (in press).

22 Elayi (2008). Jigoulov (2010) 169–70 uses the term "managed autonomy" to describe Persian relations with the Phoenician cities.

23 Sommer (2000) 238–49.

24 The best outlines of the sources and the history of events are in Briant (2002) 682–5; Ruzicka (2012) 164–74.

25 For the decisive Egyptian testimony, see recently Meyrat (2014).

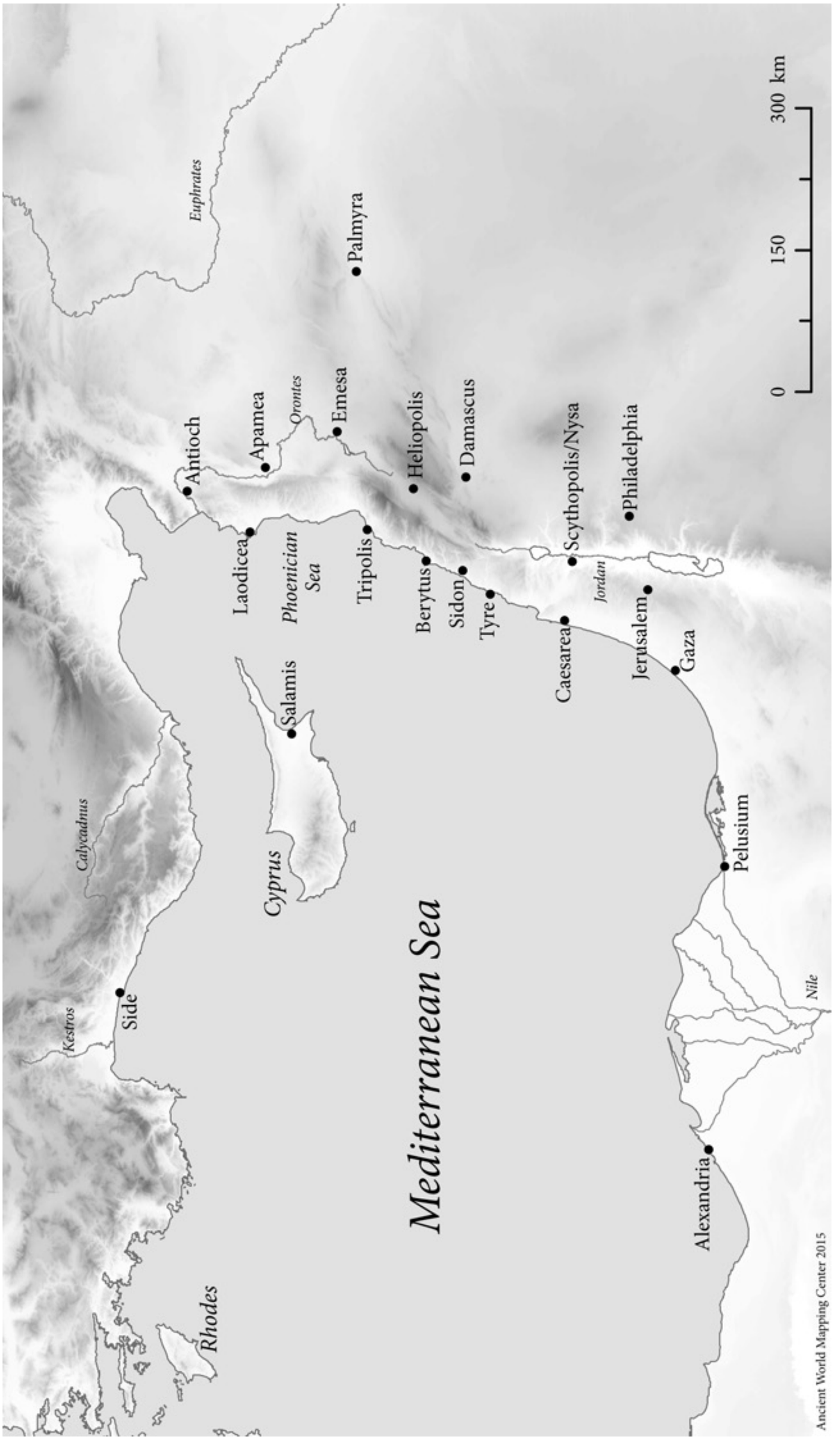


FIGURE 4.1 *The Eastern Mediterranean and Levantine coast. Highlighting sites in chapters four.*

mustered new troops in the east (Diod. Sic. 16.40.6, 42.1, 43.1), and Belesys, the satrap of Syria, and Mazaeus, the "commander" (Diodorus: *archon*) in Cilicia, reorganized the regional detachments.[26] Persian officials in the Phoenician cities[27] ordered the construction and outfitting of ships and made the Sidonians stockpile supplies for the expected troops (cavalry) (16.41.5). There was much opposition in the city to those endeavors.[28] On the one hand, the rebels sought assistance from Nectanebo II that was finally provided in the form of 4,000 mercenaries under the command of the Rhodian general Mentor (Diod. Sic.16.41.3–4, 42.2); on the other hand, they looked for help in other Phoenician cities (Diod. Sic. 16.41.3). The signal for the revolt was three-faceted: the rebels devastated the great royal *paradeisos* near the town—an act of non-strategic violence designed to get Artaxerxes' attention—moved to destroy the accumulated war supplies, and brutally murdered the Persian officials in the city (Diod. Sic. 16.41.5). At almost the same time the island of Cyprus, more precisely, nine of the city-kings there, defected from the Great King,[29] who, in return, sent Idrieus of Caria and the Athenian Phocion against the islanders (Diod. Sic. 16.42.6–7) and Belesys and Mazaeus against the insurgent Sidonians (Diod. Sic. 16.42.1). The latter were initially able to resist the royal representatives,[30] but in the end, due to a lack of external support, the appearance of the large imperial army in Syria and the betrayal of the city-king Tennes,[31] the Sidonians had to realize that the insurgency had no prospect of success (Diod. Sic. 16.43.1–45.6). In 345 at the latest, Sidon was taken, a part of those responsible for the rebellion was singled out for public execution, another deported (Babylonian Chronicle ABC Nr. 9).[32]

Scholars argue about details of this scenario: for example, our main informant, Diodorus, emphasizes that the Phoenician cities were connected by a kind of *panphoinikion*, a council that met in Tripolis and played a not to be underestimated role in the uprising (16.41.1, 45.1); the Sidonians are said to have

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26 This is probably to be gathered from Diodorus' account (16.42.1). See Ruzicka (2012) 167.

27 The word *diatribein* in Diodorus (16.41.2) probably indicates an only temporary stay of such officials for the purpose of defence preparations, Elayi (1990) 143, 146.

28 For the dating of the revolt (348/7–345?) in the light of the confused Diodoran chronology and the attempt to use Mazaeus' Sidonian coins for a solution to the problem, see Ruzicka (2012) 165, 273 n. 4–5 for the older literature.

29 According to Diodorus (16.42.3–5) they followed the Phoenician example.

30 For the thesis that Belesys might have been killed in the course of the futile punitive action, cf. recently Ruzicka (2012) 274 n. 15.

31 The Phoenician name of the king is a matter of debate: Tabnit? Tinnay? See Ruzicka (2012) 273 n. 2.

32 http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/abc9/artaxerxes.html (last accessed 30.3.2015).

been able to persuade other Phoenicians—usually, one thinks, with Diodorus, of the inhabitants of Arados, Byblos and Tyre—to join the uprising and to form an alliance—Diodorus speaks of *symmachia*—with Pharaoh Nectanebo II (see below). However, the Babylonian Chronicle Nr. 9, which reports the ultimate fate of the insurgents, knows only about Sidonians as victims, and even in Diodorus' report the extent and nature of the involvement of the other cities remain strangely colorless and indistinct. What about Diodorus' message that Tennes had been able to persuade 100 of the most distinguished Sidonians (*hoi epiphanestatoi tôn politôn*), under the pretext to go to the pan-Phoenician meeting place at Tripolis, to accompany him and the 500 soldiers (*stratiôtai*) (in order to then deliver them to the Great King[33])? Strategically, this march makes little sense, unless we are convinced that the Sidonians for the first time or, if support had so far failed, again wanted to approach the other cities for help. For Tyre, the great rival of Sidon, the preference granted to the city by Artaxerxes III after the revolt,[34] the different reactions of Tyre and Sidon on the arrival of Alexander and the Sidonian participation in the criminal action against the defeated Tyrians, suggest that Sidon had received no serious support from the neighboring city in its rebellion in the 340s. And for Byblos and Arwad, their support for the Sidonians, if indeed it ever was historical, seems not to have had any consequences.[35]

There are many indications—and here the close connection between Phoenician and Egyptian affairs is again recognizable—that the failed Persian Egyptian campaign of the year 351/0 had triggered the uprising. Even if we do not share Isocrates' assessment of the significance of the defeat, i.e., of the (moribund) state of the Persian Empire at just that time and of the character of the Persian king (*Phil.* 102–104), there can be no doubt that Artaxerxes III, after his accession to the throne, had needed some time to consolidate his rule. This view is conveyed by Diodorus Siculus in his book 16, although it must be remembered that the chronology of this part of his work is hopelessly confused. The Roman author put all the events until the fall of Sidon into the year 351/0, and the recovery of Cyprus and Egypt into the following year. The only secure date for the end of the revolt is—as a *terminus ante quem*—the year 345, which is mentioned in the Babylonian Chronicle as the year of the arrival of Sidonian prisoners in Babylon and Susa. On the other hand, it was pointed out with good reason that the insurgency cannot have begun immediately after the

33 He can, therefore, not yet have been in the area between Tripolis and Sidon Ruzicka (2012) 275 n. 24.

34 Ruzicka (2012) 275 n. 27.

35 Elayi (2013) 292–3.

Egyptian disaster of 351/0, since first the Persians had reorganized the city as a terrestrial and naval rallying point and then the insurgents had equipped the city for the uprising and applied for external support.[36] That probably leads us to 348 for the start of the revolt. Its end is likely to have been several months before the deportation of the prisoners of war, i.e., in 346 or early 345. Thus, the rebellion was more than a flash in the pan, since the Sidonians had initially been able to repel the attack of the troops sent from the Great King against them under Belesys' and Mazaeus' command.

As for the reasons for the insurgency, it is normally stated that the economic and political situation of the city after the failed Persian Egyptian campaign had been bad: Persian plans to wipe out the disgrace had, on the one hand, required that the Sidonians, i.e. the wealthy elite in the city, renewed with great effort the fleet potential currently affected by the Egyptian disaster. On the other hand, those plans must, therefore, have been connected with hardly tolerable interference of the Persian officials in the political and economic conditions in the city.[37] For the first assumption, scholars normally point to the fact that Tennes' Sidonian coinage had reused older coins and minted only two (instead of the previous seven) denominations, that also the export of silver (coins) was interrupted.[38] For the second, scholars explicitly refer to Diodorus, who calls attention to the arrogant behavior of the Persian officers and commanders as a cause of war and therefore, makes the Persians resident in Sidon the first retaliatory target of the insurgents (16.41.2, 5). But the question remains whether the Diodoran attribution of *hybris* and *hyperêphania* to the Persian officials is really covered by their deeds and is not taken—such as the *kakia* of Artaxerxes III's generals in 16.40.4—from the Greek standard repertoire of barbarian topoi. It has rightly been pointed out that a) it was the Egyptian model that, according to Diodorus (16.40.5, 42.5), led to an uprising by the Phoenicians and Cypriots; that b) the rebels had especially remembered the initially successful Tachos expedition, and that c) Nectanebo's promises of assistance must have been of such a kind that the Sidonians, despite the enormous Persian counteractive measures, could believe in the success of their rebellion.[39] Also, the approximately simultaneous defection of Cyprus from the Great King may have reinforced the Sidonians' resolve to get rid of Persian rule.

36 Briant (2002) 683.
37 Ruzicka (2012) 165–6; Elayi (2013) 288–9.
38 Elayi (2013) 288.
39 Briant (2002) 685.

If the Sidonian attacks on the Persian inventories and functionaries is self-explanatory, then the felling of trees in the large royal *paradeisos* is not. However, Diodorus gives an indication of the "ideological" value of the park[40] by referring to its possibilities to offer distraction and relaxation to the Great Kings (16.41.5). In other words, the park was considered to be a hated symbol of Persian control, and its destruction was an act of violence meant to send out the signal that the Sidonians were devoted to shake off this rule.

As for the actors involved in the rebellion, scholars see their motives differently: some claim that Tennes was the leader of the uprising and, together with the mercenary leader Mentor, who was in command of the 4,000 soldiers sent by Nectanebo II, coordinated the defence efforts until he recognized, after initial successes against Belesys and Mazaeus,[41] the futility of resistance to the advancing Artaxerxes and decided to enter into negotiations with the Great King. Others view him as a "creature" of the Persians,[42] who from the beginning was an unreliable ally of the Sidonian elite of merchants and ship-owners that—as politically significant factors in the city—are said to have been the real instigators and sponsors of the uprising and, therefore, to have finally been punished mercilessly by the Great King.[43] Actually, Tennes appears in the sources not as initiator or head of the revolt—these are "the Phoenicians" or "the Sidonians"[44]—but rather as the military commander of the city (of the mercenaries and urban militia units: Diod. Sic. 16.42.2: *misthophoroi kai hoi politikoi stratiôtai*). And he betrays the rebels immediately after he has learned that there will be no more help from the Egyptians and that the Great King advances with the imperial army.[45] If the Persian re-conquest of (large parts of) Cyprus had preceded his change of sides,[46] this might also have led Tennes

40 For the Achaemenid *paradeisoi*, see Tuplin (1996) 80–131. For the *paradeisos* near Sidon, cf. Clermont (1921); Elayi (1990) 141.

41 These successes suggest that in the Levant only small Persian contingents may have been stationed, Briant (2002) 685. It should also be recalled–with Kuhrt (2007) I, 412 n. 16–that Diodorus is (wrongly) inclined to see the mercenary force as a key strategic factor in the Persian strategy of war.

42 Ruzicka (2012) 165: "Tennes … was a Persian appointee, installed before the 351/0 campaign to insure against any renewed Egyptianizing activities by Strato, a former ally of Tachos."

43 Ruzicka (2012) 165–6.

44 Elayi (2013) 289: "Ce n'est plus la révolte d'un roi qui implique sa cité, c'est la révolte d'une cité qui entraine son roi, les autres cités phéniciennes et d'autres États."

45 Beloch (1922) 535 n. 2 does not believe in the traitor Tennes because of his execution by Artaxerxes.

46 Kuhrt (2007) I, 412 n. 19.

to betray his Sidonian friends. Whether his extradition of one hundred of "the most respected citizens," i.e. the main operators of the uprising, and the surrender of the city suggest internal conflicts in the city or just point to Tennes' attempt to save his skin remains to be seen; after all, there were precedents when the Great King had pardoned rebels and had even left them in office.[47] In Tennes' case, however, Artaxerxes III showed no mercy (Diod. Sic. 16.45.4). The episode of Tennes' confidant Thettalion (Diod. Sic. 16.43.2–4), who temporarily forced a ritualized promise of mercy and reward out of the Great King for his principal, is hardly historical. Rather, it is meant to illustrate the cunning of Tennes and the treachery of the Persian king.[48]

There is also a debate on Nectanebo's intentions and actions: some think that he had hoped to challenge Persian domination over the entire eastern Mediterranean without being forced to start his own massive, expensive and risky campaigns abroad.[49] Instead, he had put his trust in the support of foreign insurgencies, the repercussions of which would then probably have been more widely felt. Others are convinced that Nectanebo's only goal had been to prevent the Great King from starting a renewed Egyptian campaign or, at least, to increase the costs and difficulties of such an enterprise. Given the lack of major Egyptian aid to Cyprus and Phoenicia, which may have been promised—the 4,000 mercenaries were little more than a means to ward off Belesys and Mazaeus—there is hardly any proof of an Egyptian king who had seen himself as a serious competitor of the Great King in the Eastern Aegean and in the area west of the Euphrates. Diodorus does not portray Nectanebo as an instigator of the revolts in Phoenicia and Cyprus: both regions rise, "following the example of the Egyptians" (16.40.5), and it is the Sidonians who turn to the Pharaoh for help and have to persuade *him* (16.41.3). Even the (quickly failed) expedition of Tachos of 359/8, which is often cited in this context as the last Egyptian campaign outside of the heartland in the time of independence, had probably been less focused on providing a kind of permanent north-eastern buffer zone for Egypt in Syria/Palestine—thereby following the example of Thutmose III. Rather, it had aimed both at triggering unrest in the Persian province of Transeuphratene, the preparatory staging ground for future Persian campaigns against the land of the Nile, and at preventing the Great King from a re-conquest of Egypt.[50]

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47 Ruzicka (2012) 172 gives the examples.

48 Ruzicka (2012) 172 does not exclude the historicity of that episode.

49 Ruzicka (2012) 166–9.

50 I am not convinced from Ruzicka's assessment of Nectanebo's policy, cf. (2012) 166–9 and 172. Had he really hoped "(to gain) control of the whole eastern Mediterranean coastal

Thus, we come to the Persian response to the Sidonian insurgency. Diodorus describes in detail the state terror visited by Artaxerxes on the city of Sidon and its inhabitants (16.45.1–6): after Artaxerxes' murder of 500 supplicant citizens, who are normally identified as members of "the Assembly of the people" (Diod. Sic. 16.45.2),[51] 40,000 Sidonians are said to have killed themselves out of fear of the vengeance of the victors by barricading themselves in their homes and by setting their houses on fire. Artaxerxes is even alleged to have made money out of the molten silver and gold left behind after this immolation (Diod. Sic. 16.45.4–6). The mass suicide of the Sidonians has generally been doubted for good reasons,[52] but most scholars want to retain a conscious Persian pillage.[53] There can be no doubt, though, about the conscious nature of Persian use of terror in the light of the execution of Tennes and the deportation of Sidonians. Indeed, Diodorus notes that Artaxerxes' "aim was to overwhelm the Sidonians with a merciless disaster and to strike terror into the other cities by their punishment" (16.45.2; cf. 16.45.3: "merciless rage"). Clearly, Artaxerxes chose to kill a number of Sidonian leaders in a fashion that would have wide resonance among both the Sidonian population and any others who might hear of it. While such plans and royal attributes smoothly correspond to the very stereotype of a barbarian despotic ruler, there seems to be some policy behind Diodorus' sensationalism.

Indeed, parsing out the events in Sidon after the collapse of the fourth century insurgency is not unlike attempting to understand the status of Miletus after the Ionian Revolt, whose subsequent role in the Delian League is difficult to harmonize with a large-scale destruction of the city and a mass deportation of its inhabitants.[54] Understanding the precise nature of Sidon's role in Artaxerxes' wider policy of intimidation is perhaps unrecoverable from the

region, perhaps all the way up to the Euphrates" (166), his support for the rebels on Cyprus and in Phoenicia should have been different ("aid for Cypriote cities, … (a) fleet to Phoenician cities, and … reinforcements for Mentor," 172). The 4,000 mercenaries were not appropriate "(to secure) the eastern Mediterranean for Nectanebo," as Ruzicka postulates (168). Since the extra help failed to materialize, without the sources giving a reason for it, we should assume a more defensive military strategy on the side of Nectanebo.

51 Elayi (2013) 290.

52 Grainger (1991) 27–30, reminds us of the parallels of "Punic behaviour" in Carthage two centuries later or on Sicily in the course of the wars between the Carthaginians and the Greeks and Romans.

53 See, e.g., Ruzicka (2012) 173.

54 Ehrhardt (2003).

literary record.[55] Diodorus, for example, ascribes the burning of the city to the Sidonians themselves, but then writes nothing about the destruction of shrines outside the city. And yet, we have evidence for the destruction of the famous Eshmun sanctuary.[56] The ash layer discovered there near the second podium (the "tribune") is not necessarily to be attached to Persian reprisals but certainly has been and might be.[57] Indeed, a favissa, an underground reservoir or cellar near the temple that contained deliberately demolished votive sculptures, might point to Persia's role in the violent end of the rebellion.[58] Also, the destruction of ships by the Sidonian rebels (Diod. Sic. 16.45.4) is likely to be historical; however, it did not serve, as claimed by Diodorus or his source, to prevent the escape of rebels. Rather, these insurgents did not wish to let the ships fall into the hands of the Great King and so destroyed the navy themselves. The burning of the ships, then, had instead been in a sense a final service to the Egyptian Pharaoh, for whose significant support the city had hoped in vain.[59]

Former research—partly relying on a very late tradition (Syncell. 486; Solin. 35.4), partly on archaeological and numismatic evidence[60]—did suggest that the so-called Tennes revolt[61] had yielded a significant impact on settlements in the Levantine region.[62] However, more recent contributions have criticized such a view with reference to the findings in Northern and Southern Palestine.[63] And so while definite policies seem to elude us, it seems clear that the Sidonians planned and executed an insurgency against the Great King. The King, in turn put down that insurgency with as much violence as possible, using state terror

55 Sidon under Alexander (see, for example, Arr. 2.13.7–8, 15.6, 20ff.; Curt. 4.1.15ff.) is hardly compatible with just such merciless measures of the year 345 as described by Diodorus. See, e.g., Beloch (1922) 535 n. 2; Briant (2002) 713; Kuhrt (2007) I, 412 n. 18. One might even think of artistic achievements such as the so-called Alexander sarcophagus from the end of the fourth century.

56 Stucky et al. (2005) 33, 115 still see a connection between the archaeological findings there and Persian reprisals.

57 Nitschke (2007) 123 n. 333; *contra* Will (1985) 107.

58 Stucky et al. (2005) 52.

59 Ruzicka (2012) 171 considers Nectanebo to be a possible instigator and Mentor an executive official, but at this time, Mentor has already taken Tennes' perspective and equally hopes to get royal Persian mercy, which is then indeed granted to him.

60 Betlyon (1986) 638–42; Tal (2005).

61 It was called as such by Barag (1966) 8–12 and others.

62 Barag (1966) 8–12; cf. also Ruzicka (2012) 168.

63 Grainger (1991) 25; Grabbe (2004) 347–49; Tal (2005) 86 n. 15; Grabbe (2007) 132.

to send a message to both the Egyptians and the other Levantines that insurrection (and outside support for insurgents) might not be worth the effort.

Conclusions

After the defeat of the Sidonians, Artaxerxes III succeeded in quickly rearranging the political situation in Phoenicia and also in restoring the military potential of the region. This is the only way to explain that already in 343 the Great King became able to start the next Egyptian campaign, which, unlike its predecessors, resulted in a great success.[64] Among the measures implemented in Phoenicia after the end of the revolt probably was the appointment of Evagoras II as city-king of Sidon (he reigned between 346–343), whose coins are analogous to those of Tennes, but also have aspects unique to the king's Greek origin.[65] The establishment of the Cypriot king was a smart move on the part of the Great King, since Evagoras was the brother or son of Nicocles, a close friend of the former Sidonian king Strato I and popular among the local elites.

Whether the appointment of the new city-king has to be associated with drastic measures against the local autonomy of the city or not is a difficult question to answer. It is sometimes assumed that the city-king, because of his neglect of their interests and due to the Great King's stay in Egypt, was ousted from his position by the Sidonians, who then promoted Strato II, the grandson of Strato I, in his place.[66] However, such an interpretation is fraught with difficulties: either the Persians had suppressed Sidonian self-government—they would then also hardly have tolerated unauthorized behavior by the Sidonians despite the campaign in Egypt—or Artaxerxes or Mazaeus, the newly appointed governor "of Transeuphratene and Cilicia," who consistently minted coins in Sidon between 343–333, had responded to dissatisfaction in the city with the clever move of depositing Evagoras and appointing Strato, who then, in the years to come, stood loyally by his overlords (Curt 4.1.16; Diod. Sic. 17.47.1). And yet, the friendly conduct of the Sidonians and their new Prince Abdalonymus towards Alexander may show that the Persian quelling of the rebellion of the 340s was not forgotten in the city; but it may also be that the Sidonians were just able to properly evaluate the new power relations in the Eastern Mediterranean after Alexander's victory at Issus 333.

64 For the history of events, see Briant (2002) 685–8; Meyrat (2014) 303–4.
65 Elayi (2013) 290–1.
66 Elayi (2013) 292.

In the end, it seems likely that Artaxerxes' swift response to the Sidonian Revolt of 348 and his use of terror convinced the Sidonians that insurgency was not worth the effort. Admittedly, the problematic nature of our evidence, coming as it does from a Roman source cribbing a Greek original, makes definite conclusions hard to come by, but the dynamics of insurgency and state terror can help us bring some clarity and recognize patterns that exist in both the literary and archaeological evidence: a) the Sidonians raised an insurgency against Persia and attempted to join with Egypt, which had been conducting a successful insurgency against the Great King for years; b) Artaxerxes was able to stop such a union and also prevent other Levantine city-kingdoms through the use of terror in the form of public executions and deportation of elites. The fact that there were no more insurgencies in Phoenicia during Artaxerxes' reign suggests the effectiveness and sophistication of Persian terror as a policy.[67]

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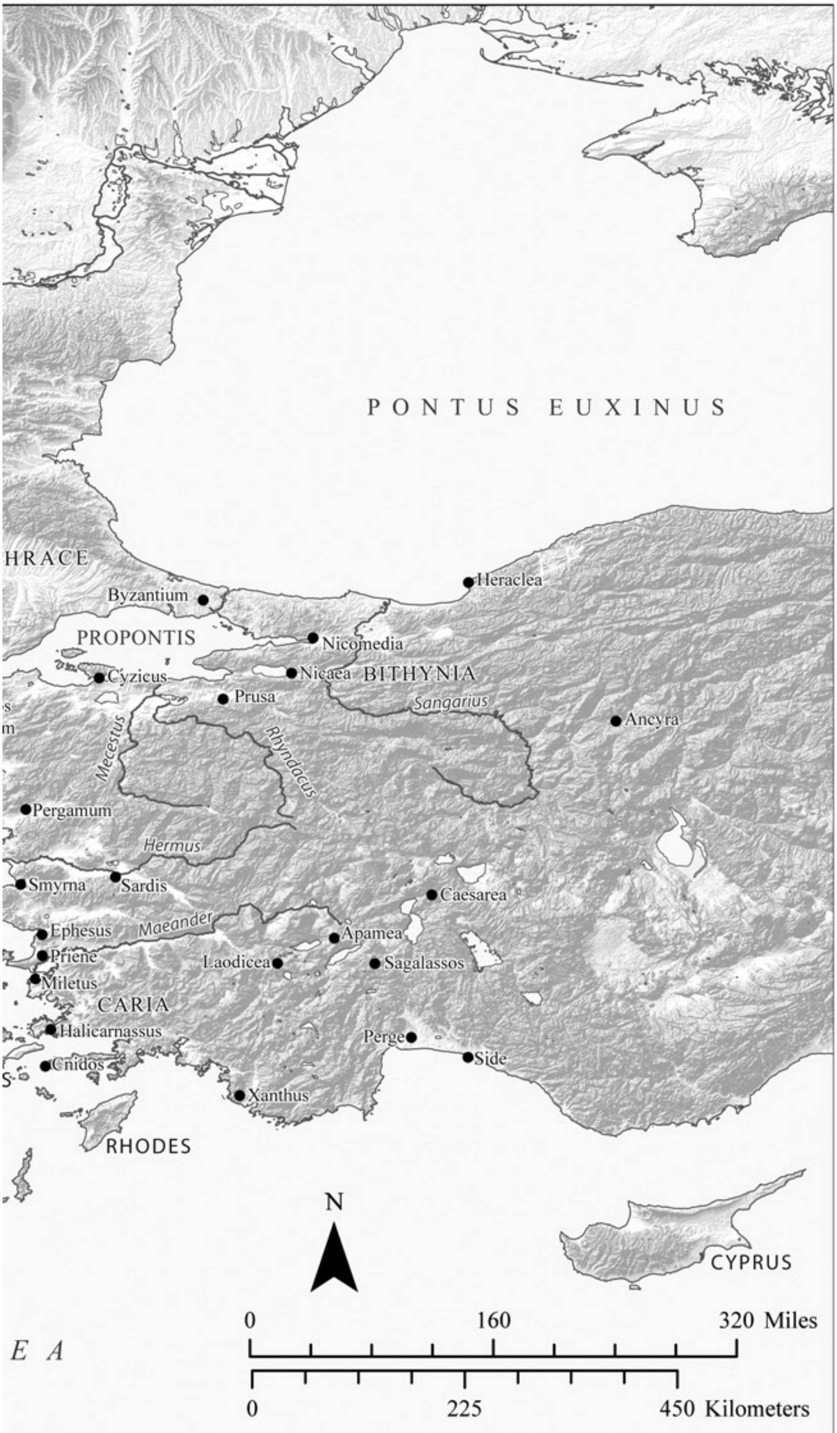
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PART 3

Classical Greece and the Hellenistic World



FIGURE 5.1 *The Greek world.*


PONTUS EUXINUS
HRACE
Byzantium
PROPONTIS
Heraclea
Nicomedia
Cyzicus
Nicaea
BITHYNIA
Prusa
Sangarius
Ancyra
Mecestus
Rhyndacus
Pergamum
Hermus
Smyrna
Sardis
Caesarea
Ephesus
Maeander
Apamea
Priene
Laodicea
Sagalassos
Miletus
CARIA
Halicarnassus
Perge
Side
Cnidos
Xanthus
RHODES
N
CYPRUS
0
160
320 Miles
E A
0
225
450 Kilometers

CHAPTER 5

Spartan State Terror: Violence, Humiliation, and the Reinforcement of Social Boundaries in Classical Sparta

Ellen G. Millender

Among ancient historians, the thorny topic of Lacedaemon's servile population, the helots, has long invited interpretation and—often heated—re-interpretation. Almost every aspect of helotry has been subject to lively debate, including the identification of helotry as a form of slavery or serfdom, helot origins, divergences between Laconian and Messenian helots, the helots' role in the Spartan military, and especially the nature of the helots' relationship with both the land they worked and their Spartan masters.[1] Recent studies have begun to devote more attention to issues such as the role of the helots in the Spartan "mirage," helot demography, and the social relations of production between Spartiates (full Spartan citizens) and helots.[2]

Modern scholarship, nevertheless, has continued to focus on the intertwined questions of helot status, treatment, and revolt. The traditional stance on the helots' role in Sparta's development treats Lacedaemonian institutions and practices as militarily oriented in origin, designed primarily to maintain control over the subjugated helot populations of Laconia and Messenia.[3] Inherent in this theory is the belief in the existence of a brutal class struggle between an increasingly small and paranoid citizen body of Spartiates and their far more numerous and threatening helots—an argument most clearly articulated by Paul Cartledge in a number of publications.[4] Several studies have problematized this long-standing picture of Spartan-helot relations. While Richard Talbert has directly challenged Cartledge's views concerning the existence of a class struggle at Sparta,[5] Stephen Hodkinson has argued for

1 Ducat (1990) offers the fullest treatment of the helots.

2 See, e.g., Luraghi and Alcock (2003).

3 Cf. Ste. Croix (1972) 89–94; Cartledge (1977) 27; (1987) 160–79; (2001b) 165; (2002) 134; (2003a); Hooker (1980) 135, 141; Finley (1986) 177. Hodkinson (2006) questions this traditional view of Spartan society. See also Birgalias (2002) 249.

4 See, esp., Cartledge (1987) 13, 160–79; (1991); (2001a) 146–52; (2002) 151–3; (2003a). Cf. Ste. Croix (1972) 90–4; Ducat (1974); (1990) 107–53.

5 Talbert (1989). See also Roobaert (1977); Whitby (1994); Birgalias (2002) 258. Paradiso (2004) tries to steer a middle course between these polarized views.

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economic interdependence as a key feature of Spartan-helot relations.[6] Peter Hunt has likewise emphasized the cooperative nature of Spartan-helot relations in his work on the helots' participation in Spartan military activity.[7]

This chapter continues the exploration of the helots' relations with their Spartiate masters but from a new perspective—that of the modern study of terrorism—in order to cast new light on the Spartans' complex interactions with their subjugated agricultural labor force. Granted, one runs the risk of anachronism in the application of a modern term like "terrorism" to the investigation of ancient history.[8] The concept of "terrorism," moreover, lacks a comprehensive and generally agreed-upon definition; and we must keep in mind the twenty-first-century spin on this term, particularly after the events of 9/11.[9] Modern studies of terrorism, in addition, have largely focused on insurgent and anti-state terrorism rather than on the problem of state terrorism and have even gone so far as to reject the very notion of state (or regime) terrorism, the form of terrorism that I intend to investigate in this study.[10]

A number of recent scholars like Alex Schmid, however, have rightly questioned the exclusion of "terrorism conducted by organs of a state from the conceptual reach of the term 'terrorism.'"[11] In the same vein Richard Jackson, Eamon Murphy, and Scott Poynting have offered an expansive definition of terrorism that crosses chronological and geographical boundaries. They define state terrorism as the purposeful threat or perpetration of violence by state agents or proxies to generate fear among an audience of potential victims, which is far broader than the actual targets of the violence, with the end purpose of achieving specific political or political-economic goals.[12] The effectiveness of state

6 Hodkinson (1997) esp. 45–53; (2000) 113–49. See also Birgalias (2002) 257.

7 Hunt (1997); (1998).

8 A number of studies, however, have demonstrated the benefits of just such a comparative approach to conflict and warfare in the ancient world. See Brice, chapter one in this volume.

9 On the varied and constantly shifting definitions of "terrorism," see, esp., Schmid (2011b), and chapter one this volume.

10 On this scholarly focus, see Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 3; Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 2–3; Schmid (2011a) 9; (2011b) 68–9. For rejection of "state terrorism" as a concept, see, e.g., Young (2006) 101.

11 Schmid (2011b) 69. Cf. Claridge (1996); (1998); Blakely (2010).

12 Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 3. Cf. Claridge (1996) esp. 52–3.

terrorism lies in its powerful communication of a message of intimidation intended to make its audience effectuate some desired outcome.[13]

Michael Stohl further suggests that state terrorism routinely occurs in highly stratified societies, where minority elites use terror as an instrument of rule against socially marginal groups that are especially vulnerable to victimization.[14] George Lopez argues that such groups' decision to employ terror generally develops in a political climate marked by the ruling group's reaction to perceived or real threats to its position, most commonly in connection with increased pressure for social, political, and economic reform.[15] It is the ruling group's ideology—in the form of authoritarianism, militarism, national security consciousness, or patriarchy—that both stimulates and rationalizes state terror.[16] Mobilized by such ideologies, ruling groups employ a relatively standard set of tactics: the control of information, the manipulation of legal mechanisms, economic coercion, and violence in the form of threats and actual attacks.[17]

As Alex Schmid and Bradley McAllister have argued, the process of identity formation plays a key role in such groups' recourse to terror: "At its most basic level, the process of identity formation requires that the in-group draws distinctions between themselves and others, highlighting the positive attributes of the in-group while simultaneously denoting the inferiority of the out-group populations."[18] Group differentiation results, first, from social categorization, which emphasizes the similarities among members of the in-group and the distinctions between the in- and out-groups. The second mechanism that facilitates this process of differentiation is social comparison, which entails the creation of positive images for the in-group and negative perceptions of the out-group.[19]

On the basis of such studies, I am defining state terror as a form of political theater, performed by state agents acting on behalf of a ruling group within a highly stratified society. This performance consists of the broadcast of a

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13 Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 3. Cf. Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 7; Stohl (2006) esp. 2, 6, 8. On terror as a form of political theater, see Fromkin (1975) 691–2; most recently Law (2015a) 5–6.

14 Stohl (2006) 14. See also Gurr (1986).

15 Lopez (1984) 59–65.

16 Lopez (1984) 65–9.

17 Lopez (1984) 69–73; cf. 63–5.

18 McAllister and Schmid (2011) 248. See also Nagengast (1994); Rodriguez-Carballeira and Javaloy (2005) 202.

19 McAllister and Schmid (2011) 248. See also Rodriguez-Carballeira and Javaloy (2005) 202.

powerful message, which is primarily calculated to instill fear, via either the threat or the actual perpetration of violence, in its socially and politically marginalized audience of victims and spectators. Through this advertisement of intimidation, the ruling group seeks at once to demoralize its targeted audience and to strengthen its identity in contradistinction to a demonized outgroup, in response to perceived or actual threats to its dominant position.

As the following study demonstrates, classical Sparta meets the modern scholarly criteria for state-sponsored terrorism included in this definition—with the Spartans as the performers and the helots as the audience of threatened or actualized violence. What makes classical Sparta such an appropriate case study of state terror in the ancient world is the relatively rich evidence on the Spartans' relationship with the helots, which should resonate with anyone familiar with modern examples of state terror and repression.[20] Obvious and important differences abound, and we should always carefully approach such comparisons with modern states. Nevertheless, the Spartan *politeia* offers parallels to certain examples of modern states that have deployed terror tactics in its tiny elite's monopolization of political power and control over agriculturally productive land, which was farmed by a far larger subjugated population. One may, for example, compare Sparta with those twentieth-century repressive Latin American regimes "in which only a few had great power and wealth and the many were nonparticipants, docile subjects of a political economy that systematically exploited them."[21] Like these repressive regimes, the Spartan elite, in order to maintain the status quo in the face of increasing socio-economic pressures, turned to a policy of terror.

As I will argue, the evidence on ancient Sparta suggests that its elite, likely at some point in the course of the fifth century BCE, began to formulate a policy of terrorism that was designed to frighten, humiliate, and demoralize the helots. Some of these tactics will seem all too familiar to the student of modern state terror, such as the Spartans' employment of their own brand of enforcement mechanism, the *crypteia*.[22] This policy also performed a number of essential ideological functions for the Spartans that, as we have seen above,

20 Cartledge (2002) 299–307 provides translations of many of the key sources on the helots. For modern examples of state terror, one might consider the extensive evidence on state-directed violence in Latin America. See, e.g., Menjívar and Rodríguez (2005); Raphael (2010). See also Westra (2012) 129–34 and the extensive bibliography provided by Duncan and Schmid (2011) 495–6.

21 Sloan (1984) at 96. Cf. Menjívar and Rodríguez (2005).

22 On the *crypteia*, see, below. All dates are BCE unless otherwise indicated.

scholars associate with the process of identity formation as a key element of state terrorism.[23] As it reified the social divide between the Spartiates and the helots, state terror simultaneously bolstered the communal identities of both groups: (1) the helots as enemies of the state whose social inferiority necessarily invited both derision and violence and (2) the Spartiates as citizen warriors whose social and military superiority validated, and even made inevitable, their domination of the helots.[24] I will further argue that pressure for such social demarcation became particularly acute during the late fifth and early fourth centuries, as the Spartiates grew increasingly dependent on the helots, both economically and militarily, as a result of chronic *oliganthrōpia*—i.e. their shrinking pool of manpower.[25]

The Ties that Bind: Spartiate-Helot Interdependence

Before we turn to an analysis of this policy of terrorism, it is necessary to examine the complex nexus of ties that bound the helots to Sparta's citizen class and underpinned Spartan economic, social, and political structures. As we shall see, the Spartiates' successful exploitation of the helots, which ensured the citizens' political status and enabled all full citizens to devote themselves to military training, proved in the end to be a double-edged sword. The structural changes that Sparta experienced over the course of the classical period at once accelerated the decline of its own citizen body and reliance on an ever-increasing helot population. Those same helot-Spartiate bonds that had fueled Sparta's rise as a military power ultimately destabilized Spartan society and prompted the implementation of repressive measures against the helots.

The Spartiate citizen elite, who inhabited a cluster of five villages located towards the northern end of the Sparta plain, possessed extensive estates throughout Laconia and Messenia worked by the helots.[26] The often great distance between the Spartans' villages and estates, when combined with

23 McAllister and Schmid (2011) 248. See also Nagengast (1994); Rodriguez-Carballeira and Javaloy (2005) 202.

24 Cf. Ducat (1990) 175–82.

25 On Spartan *oliganthrōpia*, see Cawkwell (1983); Figueira (1986); Cartledge (1987) 37–43; (2002) 263–72; Millender (2001) 146–7.

26 On the helots' labor on Spartiate estates, see, e.g., Tyrt. fr. 6 West; Pl. *Alc*. I.122d; Arist. *Pol.* 1271b40–72a2; Livy 34.27.9; Plut. *Lyc*. 24.3, *Mor*. 239d–e; Aelian VH 13.19. For a full discussion of helot agricultural labor, see Hodkinson (2000) 113–49.

their commitment to military training year round and many civic responsibilities, effectively made the Spartans absentee landlords who may have spent relatively little time on their respective estates—particularly in Messenia.[27] The Spartiates' exploitation of helot labor came to an end in Messenia following Sparta's disastrous loss at Leuctra in 371 and the Thebans' consequent liberation of Messenia. In Laconia, however, helots continued to provide most of the labor on Spartiate estates until at least the second century.[28]

The Laconian helots' experience likely diverged in other respects from that of their Messenian counterparts, particularly given their generally greater proximity to Sparta and their lack of a communal identity.[29] Nevertheless, all helots shared the same legal status as the property of their Spartiate masters, rather than of the state as Cartledge and others have argued.[30] That is not to deny, of course, the communal nature of Spartan oversight of the helots.[31] According to Thucydides, for example, it was the Lacedaemonians who collectively decreed that the helots who had fought with Brasidas in Thrace (the so-called "Brasideioi") should be emancipated in 421 (5.34). Myron of Priene likewise notes the Spartans' communal responsibility for the manumission of helots (*FGrH* 106 F 1). We also possess evidence, to be discussed in further detail below, for the ephors' annual declaration of war against the helots (Plut. *Lyc.* 28.4 = Aristotle fr. 538 Rose) and young Spartans' right to kill helots without any apparent concern regarding their Spartiate owners (Heraclides Lembus 373.10 Dilts = Aristotle fr. 611.10 Rose). Xenophon provides further evidence of the communal nature of helot oversight in his claim that every Spartiate had the right to borrow another citizen's slaves in case of need (*Lac. Pol.* 6.3). As

27 On the Spartans' limited time on those estates not close to Sparta, see Luraghi (2002) 231; Hodkinson (2003) 279.

28 Although the evidence surrounding the Spartan king (or tyrant) Nabis' reforms is problematic, the sources suggest that Nabis put an end to helotage during his rule (207–192). See Polyb. 16.13.1; Livy 34.31.11, 14; Strabo 8.5.4; Plut. *Phil.* 16.4. See also Cartledge and Spawforth (2002) 69–70, 246 n. 18 (where Cartledge cites previous scholarship on Nabis' freeing of "slaves"); Hodkinson (2000) 113; Ducat (1990) 193–9.

29 Cartledge (1987) 176 argues that the Messenians posed the greatest danger to the Spartiates but warns against exaggerating either economic or ideological differences between Laconian and Messenian helots.

30 See, e.g., Cozzoli (1978) 213–6; (1979) 158–62; Ducat (1990) 19–29; Hodkinson (2000) 114–5; Luraghi (2002) 238; (2003). *Contra* Cartledge (2003a) 17–8, who argues that the ancient evidence, particularly Thucydides (cf. 5.34), points to collective ownership and control of the helots. Cf. Ste. Croix (1972) 90; Talbert (1989) 22–3.

31 Cf. Ducat (1990) 19–29; Hodkinson (1997) 48; (2000) 114–5; Luraghi (2002) 238.

Hodkinson has pointed out, the helots' dual role as both the private property of individual Spartiates and subjects of significant communal domination seriously limited the Spartan citizens' control over their primarily agricultural labor force.[32]

Equally complicated is the ancient sources' portrait of the Spartiates' relations with their subjugated laborers. Herodotus, for example, provides no examples of violence or even tension between the two groups.[33] Xenophon furnishes a similarly neutral picture of Spartan social relations except in his account of the conspiracy in 399 of the *hypomeiōn* ("inferior") Cinadon, who believed that the helots hated the Spartiates and would consequently support his revolution (*Hell.* 3.3.4–11).[34] As we shall see below, however, Thucydides suggests that the Spartans routinely approached the helots with fear, duplicity, and brutality (4.80). Theopompus later comments on the helots' harsh and bitter plight (*FGrH* 115 F 13), and Aristotle describes the helots as ever lying in wait for their masters' disasters (*Pol.* 1269a37–9).[35] And though we have no evidence of repeated revolts or constant disaffection on the part of the helots, we know that at least the Messenians revolted after the earthquake in the late 460s and later after Leuctra in 371, and that helots deserted in numbers during the Archidamian War (cf. Thuc. 4.41.3).[36]

While we cannot and should not dismiss such evidence of tension and outright hostility, recent studies have argued that relations between the Spartans and their helots were also often marked by cooperation, even in the agricultural work that was the primary service performed by the great majority of helots throughout their lives. As Hodkinson has demonstrated in his work on the role that property and wealth played in Spartan society and historical development, the Spartiates' economic exploitation of the helots created long-term mutual dependence between landowner and cultivator.[37] It was through helot labor on his estates that each Spartiate maintained his family and made his mandated monthly contributions of sufficient agricultural produce to

32 Hodkinson (2000) 115–6.

33 See Jordan (1990) 44–5, who collects Herodotus' references to the helots. See also Whitby (1994) 94.

34 See Whitby (1994) 94–5, 108.

35 Whitby (1994) 108 believes that Thucydides' and Aristotle' views on the helots were shaped by Spartan crises—the revolt in the late 460s and the Pylos affair in the 420s for Thucydides and the liberation of Messenia in 369 for Aristotle. On Aristotle's and Theopompus' commentary on helotage, see also Ducat (1990) 88–90.

36 On helot revolts, see Ducat (1990) 129–44.

37 Hodkinson (1997) esp. 45–53; (2000) 113–9, 130. Cf. Birgalias (2002) 257.

his *syssition* (= common mess), thus ensuring the continuation of his citizen status.[38] Helot labor, in other words, determined the individual Spartiate's civic identity and underpinned the *syssitia* that primarily functioned to bolster social and political cohesion among the *Homoioi* ("the Peers") through the shared contribution of foodstuffs, moderated consumption of common food and drink, and the inculcation of male civic values.[39] The helots' very existence as an agricultural labor force also enabled the Spartiates to devote their time to military training year round and to create the superlative hoplite force that made Sparta a leading military power on the Greek mainland.[40]

The Spartiates' helot cultivators equally benefited from this economic arrangement. As Hodkinson demonstrates, helots normally remained attached to the holdings that they cultivated rather than to particular Spartiates. They also provided their masters with a proportional share of the crops that they farmed on Spartiate estates and retained the rest for themselves and their dependents.[41] These arrangements not only safeguarded helot subsistence but also allowed the helots a great degree of self-sufficiency and independence from their masters. The sources suggest that this sharecropping system also gave the helots opportunities to enrich themselves, if we credit the evidence on helots who were able to buy their freedom (cf. Plut. *Cleom*. 23.1).[42]

While agricultural labor constituted the essential servile function of most helots, ancient evidence reveals that helots served in other capacities, such as domestic servants in Spartiate *oikoi*.[43] Indeed, as the ancient sources make clear, helots not only released Spartiate citizens from agricultural work but also exempted both male and female members of citizen households from domestic labor. Xenophon, for example, notes that in Sparta female domestics saw to the production of clothing, thus freeing Spartan females to devote themselves to physical training in preparation for childbirth (*Lac. Pol.* 1.3–4). As Hodkinson

38 On the required contribution of foodstuffs, see Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 7.3; Arist. *Pol.* 1271a26–37, 1272a12–16; Plut. *Lyc*. 12.2; Athen. 4.141c. See also Arist. *Pol.* 1270a15–b6, 1330a6–8.

39 Millender (2011). On the helots' foundational role in the Spartan property system and Sparta's socio-political structures, see Hodkinson (2000) 113–49.

40 Millender (forthcoming).

41 On this sharecropping arrangement and the percentage of produce that the helots owed their masters, see Hodkinson (1992); (2000) 125–31; (2003); Figueira (2003) 199–201. On the agricultural work and economic status of the helots, see Ducat (1990) 53–64.

42 See Birgalias (2002) 257.

43 Cf., e.g., Hdt. 6.63; Xen. *Hell.* 5.4.28, *Lac. Pol.* 7.5; Plut. *Lys*. 16.2. See also Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 6.3. See Ducat (1990) 54–5; Hodkinson (1997); Paradiso (1997). Cartledge (1987) 174 suggests that such helots were likely Laconian rather than Messenian.

argues, Spartan households thus were far more dependent on servile labor for their domestic production than their counterparts in other *poleis*.[44]

Although the sources provide no information on how or why certain helots became domestic servants, they suggest that helots performed roles in Spartiate households which bound them closely to their masters and which could create relations of mutual dependence and even emotional attachment.[45] One may, of course, question the veracity of Herodotus' account of the helot nurse who cared for the ugly Spartan girl who later became the second wife of the Eurypontid king Ariston (6.61–2) or his story of the helot attendant who led the temporarily blind Spartiate soldier Eurytus into the thick of the battle at Thermopylae (7.229). Evidence, however, suggests that Eurytus' situation was in no way unique and that Spartiates commonly had helots who served them throughout their lives and accompanied them into battle as batmen and shield-bearers.[46]

Xenophon's reference to Spartiate bastards (*nothoi*) in his account of the force King Agesipolis led to Olynthus in 381, in turn, attests to sexual relations between Spartiates and female helots (*Hell.* 5.3.9). As Hodkinson has argued, these *nothoi*, who appear to have been incorporated into the three central *loci* of Spartiate socio-political activity—the traditional upbringing, the messes, and the army (cf. Xen. *Hell.* 5.3.9), could confer benefits on both their Spartiate fathers and helot mothers. Even though *nothoi* could not become full citizens, their integration into Spartiate society may have increased the prestige of their helot relations. Through their production and maintenance of *nothoi*, Spartiate fathers, in turn, could at once advertise their wealth and boast of their contribution of much-needed manpower to the *polis*.[47] Of course, we must beware of idealizing any of these Spartiate-helot associations, given their inherent power differential and the likely sexually exploitative nature of the relationships between Spartiate masters and female helots. Nevertheless, the evidence

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44 Hodkinson (1997) 47.

45 Hodkinson (1997) 49–55.

46 For evidence of helot attendance on Spartiate youths, see Pl. *Leg.* 633b–c. For other examples of personal helot attendants serving Spartans on campaign, see Hdt. 9.10.1, 28.2, 29.1; Thuc. 4.8.9, 16.1; Xen. *Hell.* 4.5.14, 8.39; Critias 88 B 37 (D-K) *apud* Libanius, *Or.* 25, 63. Cf. Herodotus' account of the helot attendants of King Cleomenes I and their involvement in the battle of Sepeia c. 494 (6.80–1). See *GSW* 49–51. Hodkinson (1997) 50 believes that in most cases the soldier whom helots attended on campaign was the Spartiate to whom they were attached in peacetime. Cf. Ducat (1990) 157–8. *Contra* Welwei (1974) 120–4, who argues that the helots on campaign were collectively in service to the Spartan army rather than individually bound to their masters.

47 Hodkinson (1997) 53–5, 66.

on helots' links to Spartiate *oikoi* even more clearly underlines the complexity of Spartiate-helot relations and the degree to which the participants could become profoundly interdependent.[48]

We find further signs of mutual dependence in the ancient evidence on the Spartiates' military exploitation of their helots. As I have discussed elsewhere, Sparta made ever greater use of non-Spartiate soldiers during the classical period, including both soldiers who lacked full political rights—i.e. *hypomeiones, perioeci*, and *neodamōdeis* (manumitted helots)—and those who possessed no political rights at all—i.e. mercenaries, allies, and helots.[49] Herodotus reports that helots served in battle during the Persian Wars, but he does not clarify whether they functioned as light-armed troops or as attendants.[50] Thucydides provides much more information on helot participation in Spartan military activity during the Peloponnesian War, beginning with his account of certain helots' loyal service to Sparta in 424 during the crisis at Pylos. According to Thucydides, these helots responded to a promise of freedom by risking great danger in order to bring aid to the Spartiates trapped on Sphacteria (4.26.5–7).[51] In that same year we find the Spartans enrolling seven hundred helots as hoplites for the Spartan commander Brasidas' Thracian expedition (4.80.5; 5.34.1). Thucydides also reveals that the Spartans took the field twice in 418 with large forces that included helots (5.57.1, 64.2).[52] Like Herodotus, however, Thucydides fails to illuminate the nature of their service.[53]

48 Cf. Hodkinson (1997) 48–9.

49 In the late fifth and, increasingly, over the course of the fourth century, we even find Spartan forces that comprised only one or a few Spartiates leading such non-Spartiate groups. See, e.g., Brasidas' force in Thrace in 424 (Thuc. 4.80.5), Gylippus' force in Sicily in 413 (Thuc. 7.58.3), Clearchus' force in Byzantium in 408 (Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.15), and Thibron's force in Asia in 399 (Xen. *Hell.* 3.1.4–5). See Millender (forthcoming). Lazenby (1985) 16–20 and Hawkins (2011) argue that *hypomeiones* played an increasingly important role in Spartan armies as Spartan citizen numbers declined. On the Spartans' use of mercenaries, see Millender (2006).

50 See Hdt. 7.229; 8.25.1; 9.10.1, 28.2, 29.1, 80, 85.2; cf. 6.80–1. For the view that helots served as light-armed soldiers in early battles, including Thermopylae and Plataea, see Hunt (1997); (1998) 31–9, cf. 116–20; van Wees (2004) 61, 181–2. *Contra* Schwartz (2009) 139–40.

51 Ste. Croix (1972) 91–2 assumes that these loyal helots were Laconian rather than Messenian.

52 Lazenby (1985) 59–60 conjectures that helots may have participated in a number of other military actions during the Peloponnesian War, including the Peloponnesians' invasions of Attica and the siege of Plataea.

53 Cf. Thuc. 4.8.9, 80.2–3. See Hunt (1998) 56–62.

In the fourth century we find helots serving as rowers in the Spartan fleet (Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.12, Myron *FGrH* 106 F 1). Xenophon further claims that over six thousand helots helped to defend Sparta in the face of the Theban Epaminondas' invasion in 370/69 (*Hell.* 6.5.28–9).[54] While Xenophon's number may be somewhat exaggerated, Thucydides suggests that the number of helots who performed military service for the Spartans was indeed high. In a controversial passage addressed in detail below, Thucydides claims that the Spartans at some point in the late 420s set a test to identify those helots who posed the greatest danger to them. According to Thucydides, they invited the helots to select from amongst themselves those who had rendered the Lacedaemonians the most distinguished service in war and thus deserved manumission. Thucydides' statement that this process led to the selection of as many as two thousand helots points to a large pool of helot "veterans" (4.80.3–4).

During this same period the Lacedaemonians also created a new force composed of emancipated helots known as the *neodamōdeis*.[55] Thucydides first mentions this force in his discussion of the Spartans' emancipation of the "Brasideioi," who were later settled with the *neodamōdeis* at Lepreum on Laconia's border with Elis (5.34.1). Thucydides makes it clear that the *neodamōdeis* and the "Brasideioi" fought as hoplites in the Lacedaemonian army that also presumably included helots (cf. 5.64.2) at the battle of Mantinea in 418 (5.67.1; cf. 5.71.3, 72.3). In 413 the Spartans sent a force of 600 hoplites specially selected from among both the helots and the *neodamōdeis* to fight in Sicily under a Spartiate commander (Thuc. 7.19.3, 58.3). The *neodamōdeis* later formed part of the force that the Lacedaemonians sent to Euboea in the winter of 413/12 (Thuc. 8.5.1). These emancipated helots played an even more prominent role in the Spartan military in the fourth century, sometimes in great numbers. Xenophon notes the force of approximately one thousand *neodamōdeis* sent to Asia with Thibron in 400 (*Hell.* 3.1.4) and the roughly two thousand *neodamōdeis* who accompanied Agesilaus in 396 (*Hell.* 3.4.2).[56] We last hear of the *neodamōdeis* serving in a garrison in Sciritis in 370/69 (*Hell.* 6.5.24).

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54 Cf. Diodorus, who provides the much smaller number of one thousand (15.65.6).

55 On the helots' and *neodamōdeis*' service in the Spartan army, see Gomme, *HCT* 4.35–6; Ste. Croix (1972) 91–2; Cartledge (1987) 175–6; Talbert (1989) 23–7; Ducat (1990) 159–66; Hunt (1997); (1998). Cartledge (1987) 174–5 suggests that Laconian helots were "the likeliest candidates" for such preferential treatment. For a general discussion of the *neodamōdeis*, see Willetts (1954).

56 See also Xen. *Hell.* 1.3.15; 5.2.24; 6.5.24.

One could possibly argue that the Spartans' military exploitation of these groups helped them to maintain their control over the helots. This deployment of helots, however, also points to an increasing reliance on non-Spartiate soldiers as a result of the *oliganthrōpia* that severely decreased the Spartan citizen body over the course of the fifth century.[57] On the helot end of this arrangement, cooperation on the field may have arisen from a number of different factors, especially fear, self-interest, and the promise of rewards. Such cooperation, however, may also signal at least some helots' willingness to buy into Spartan domination. Similarly, the Spartans' creation of the *neodamōdeis* likely provided mutual benefits to themselves and the helots. This helpful addition to the Lacedaemonians' ranks would have promoted more stable relations between Spartiate masters and their cultivators by providing ambitious helots with an opportunity for tangible advancement.[58]

In sum, Sparta's socio-political structures, property system, and military organization at once relied on and created a web of interdependent relations between the Spartiates and the helots. What should be immediately striking is the degree to which the Spartiates' very *politeia* and identity were bound up with—nay entirely dependent on—their helots. And this state of dependency can only have increased in degree over the fifth and the fourth centuries, as Sparta's citizen body drastically declined in number, largely as a result of its citizens' growing poverty and inability to make the mandated mess contributions that ensured their citizen status.[59] The total number of adult male Spartan citizens of full status fell from approximately eight thousand c. 480 (cf. Hdt. 7.234.2) to around fifteen hundred by the battle of Leuctra in 371 and well below a thousand by Aristotle's day.[60] The critical state of Spartan *oliganthrōpia* became clear in 425, when the Spartans sought to make peace with Athens in order to recover the approximately 120 Spartiates

57 On the effect of this demographic crisis on Sparta's military organization, see Cawkwell (1983) 385–94; Cartledge (1987) 37–43. See, however, van Wees (2004) 84–5, who argues that Sparta's increasing dependence on non-Spartiate forces resulted from other factors.

58 See Cawkwell (1983) 392–3.

59 For a different reading on the state of dependency that arose from Spartan *oliganthrōpia*, see Hodkinson (1997) 66–7.

60 Aristotle claims that Sparta's citizen body had already fallen below 1,000 before Leuctra (*Pol.* 1270a29–32). See, however, Xenophon's account of the Spartan forces at Leuctra (*Hell.* 6.1.1, 4.15, 4.17), on the basis of which scholars have provided estimates of the total number of adult male Spartiates that never surpass 1,500. See, e.g., Ste. Croix (1972) 332, who gives 1,200 as his estimate, and Cozzoli (1979) 11, who arrives at a total of 1,400.

captured on Sphacteria (cf. Thuc. 4.38.5).[61] Thucydides' later description of the Lacedaemonian forces at the battle of Mantinea in 418 (cf. 5.64.3, 68.3) likewise attests to the significant drop in Spartiate numbers from the early fifth century. As Cartledge has pointed out, the five-sixths of a full Spartiate call-up at Mantinea (Thuc. 5.64.3) amounted to approximately 3,000 men and reveals that "the total number of Spartiates of military age had dropped by a little over half in about two generations."[62]

It is Xenophon's account of the conspiracy of Cinadon in 399, however, that provides the most vivid picture of Sparta's manpower crisis (*Hell.* 3.3.4–11). We should, of course, cautiously approach Cinadon's claim that non-Spartiates outnumbered Spartiates 100 to 1 (*Hell.* 3.3.5). Thomas Figueira argues against very high multiples of helots to Spartiates and claims that the ratio of 7 to 1 implied by our information on the mobilization for Plataea (Hdt. 9.10.1, 28.2, 29.1) "now seems a high upper limit."[63] The ratio Figueira posits is nevertheless striking, and Xenophon's stark description of Sparta's demographic situation still conveys the precarious nature of an ever-decreasing Spartan citizen body's relationship with its ever-growing helot population.[64]

The Spartans' chronic *oliganthrōpia* and the corresponding growth in their dependency on the helots created the perfect storm of political, social, and economic problems that Lopez attributes to the development of state terrorism. Lopez argues that ruling elites, when faced with pressure for political, social, and economic reform, either cannot or refuse to respond to such pressure constructively but rather react to their changing environment with "increased militant policies of coercive control."[65] Such, I would argue, was the state of affairs in late fifth- and early fourth-century Sparta. Despite the rapid structural changes in Sparta brought on by the Peloponnesian War and Sparta's concomitant demographic crisis, the embattled Spartiate elite refused to address the nexus of social, political, and economic problems that eventually led to Sparta's failure to recover from its loss at Leuctra in 371.[66] Instead,

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61 See Millender (2001) 146. See also Ducat (1990) 81; Cartledge (1987) 39–41; (2002) 215, 219, 266–7.

62 Cartledge (2002) 219–20; cf. 264.

63 Figueira (2003) 217.

64 See Cartledge (1987) 164–5; Millender (2001) 147. For helot demography, see Figueira (2003); Scheidel (2003).

65 Lopez (1984) 61.

66 On the structural changes that facilitated both the breakdown of the solidarity of the Spartan citizen body and Sparta's eventual decline as a power, see Hodkinson (1993).

the Spartans implemented a policy of terror that not only aimed to keep the helots quiescent but was also geared to create an unbridgeable social barrier between these highly interdependent populations.

Spartan Terror and the Crafting of Helot Inferiority

Indeed, the same period that witnessed the drastic decline in Sparta's citizen body, i.e. the late fifth and fourth centuries, has provided us with the bulk of our extant evidence for the Spartans' harsh treatment of the helots. This evidence tends to figure prominently in those studies that argue in favor of a Spartan class struggle and thus deserves careful scrutiny. Even if one does not ascribe to this traditional reading of Spartan-helot relations, one cannot dismiss the relatively consistent picture that the ancient sources provide concerning the Spartans' growing insecurity about the helots upon whom they had become so dependent. As the evidence suggests, the Spartans threatened, attacked, and ritually humiliated those very same helots in a concerted effort to shore up their own dominance and to reify the helots' inferiority. Through their broadcast of a powerful message of intimidation and use of terror to define themselves vis-à-vis a despised and demoralized out-group, the Spartans provide a particularly apt—if ancient—example of state terrorism.

Perhaps most controversial in the pool of evidence on Spartan "terror" is Thucydides' account of the Spartans' duplicitous and cold-blooded murder of two thousand helots at some point before 424 (4.80.1–4). After mentioning the Spartans' plan to send out an expedition that would at once facilitate revolts among Athens' allies and rid Lacedaemon of potentially rebellious helots (4.80.1–2), Thucydides makes a frustratingly ambiguous statement about the Spartans' relations with the helots. He notes the Spartans' fear of the helots' numbers and obstinacy and then states either (1) that Spartan policy in general had always been geared toward defense against the helots or (2) that Sparta's policy with regard to the helots had always been conducted with a view to security (4.80.3).[67] Whichever reading may be more accurate, Thucydides clearly believed that the Spartans' concerns about the helots led to a fear that

67 While Cartledge (1987) 13 and (2002) 211 prefers the broader interpretation that makes precaution against the helots the determinant of Spartan governance in general, he at times ((2001a) 128; (2003a) 20) seems to adopt a slightly more agnostic stance. See also Ste. Croix (1972) 92; Figueira (2003) 195. For the more restricted reading of the passage, see Gomme, *HCT* 3.547–8; Lewis (1977) 28 n. 7; Whitby (1994) 97.

bordered on paranoia and acts of brutality, such as the murder he describes in painstaking detail (4.80.3–4):[68]

> They proclaimed that as many as claimed to have rendered the best service to the Lacedaemonians in war should be selected in order to receive their freedom, conducting a test in the belief that the first to claim their freedom would, in each case, also be the ones most likely to revolt on account of their high spirit. And they selected about two thousand, who crowned themselves and went around the temples, as if they had been freed. The Spartans, however, soon afterward did away with them, and no one knew how each one of them was murdered.[69]

A number of scholars have defended the historicity of this reported massacre, largely on the basis of Thucydides' reputation as a judicious and careful historian.[70] Others, however, have been troubled by various aspects of this account, including the number of helots, the logistics, and the source of Thucydides' information.[71] For such reasons it is perhaps not surprising that Ephorus, only a few decades later, rejected multiple aspects of this account and replaced Thucydides' mysterious version of the helots' massacre with his own description of their assassination in their own homes (cf. Diod. 12.67.4).[72]

Several scholars have also addressed the apparent disconnect between the Spartans' execution of two thousand helot war veterans and their recruitment of seven hundred helots for Brasidas' expedition to Chalcidice in 424. Annalisa Paradiso, for example, questions the simultaneity of the events, particularly given the unlikelihood that helots would voluntarily enlist for Brasidas' contingent after the slaughter of thousands of their counterparts.[73] Michael Whitby,

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68 See Cartledge (2003a) 20–1. See also Ducat (1990) 81–2. For other Thucydidean allusions to Spartan fears concerning the helots, helot revolts, and the Athenians' awareness of this "Achilles heel" of Spartan policy, see Thuc. 1.101–103, 118.2, 132.4; 4.3.3, 41.3, 55.1; 5.14.3, 23.3; 7.26.2; 8.40.2.

69 Thuc. 4.80.3–4: προεῖπον αὐτῶν ὅσοι ἀξιοῦσιν ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις γεγενῆσθαι σφίσιν ἄριστοι, κρίνεσθαι, ὡς ἐλευθερώσοντες, πεῖραν ποιούμενοι καὶ ἡγούμενοι τούτους σφίσιν ὑπὸ φρονήματος, οἵπερ καὶ ἠξίωσαν πρῶτος ἕκαστος ἐλευθεροῦσθαι, μάλιστα ἂν καὶ ἐπιθέσθαι. καὶ προκρίναντες ἐς δισχιλίους, οἱ μὲν ἐστεφανώσαντό τε καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ περιῆλθον ὡς ἠλευθερωμένοι, οἱ δὲ οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον ἠφάνισάν τε αὐτοὺς καὶ οὐδεὶς ᾔσθετο ὅτῳ τρόπῳ ἕκαστος διεφθάρη.

70 See, esp., Jordan (1990); Cartledge (2003a) 20–2; Harvey (2004); Trundle (forthcoming).

71 See, e.g., Talbert (1989) 24–5; Whitby (1994) 97–9; Hornblower (1996) 267; Paradiso (2002).

72 See Paradiso (2004) 181–2, 185.

73 Paradiso (2004) 187. See also Birgalias (2002) 256.

too, argues that the massacre of two thousand helot volunteers would have "necessitated a 'long convalescence' for Spartan-helot relations for which there was clearly insufficient time before more volunteers were enrolled for service with Brasidas."[74]

There clearly seem to be a number of problems with Thucydides' report, and it may be the case that this massacre never took place or occurred but on a much smaller scale. Whatever the case may be, Thucydides viewed this instance of brutality as part and parcel of a policy toward the helots that likewise embraced the enlistment—and thus social advancement and eventual manumission—of helots.[75] And Thucydides' link, in fact, makes perfect sense when we consider the critical state of Spartan *oliganthrōpia* by the late 420s.[76] As we have seen above, the Spartans eagerly pursued peace in 425 for the sake of a mere 120 Spartiates (Thuc. 4.38.5).[77] Soon thereafter we first hear about the helots' participation on Brasidas' campaign as well as their eventual emancipation and settlement with the *neodamōdeis* in Lepreum (Thuc. 5.34.1). Only a few years later we find the "Brasideioi" and *neodamōdeis*—and perhaps even unemancipated helots (cf. Thuc. 5.64.2)—beefing up the Spartans' hoplite force at Mantinea (Thuc. 5.67.1; cf. 5.71.3, 72.3). Cartledge has also argued for 418 as a *terminus post quem* for the brigading of the *perioeci* and Spartiates in the same units.[78] As they became ever more dependent on non-Spartiates and now even found themselves forced to employ helots and ex-helots on a variety of military operations, the Spartans in all probability became increasingly anxious concerning their relationship with their subjugated population.

It is thus not surprising to find in this same period the development of a policy of terror that simultaneously would have created fear among its helot audience and reinforced the social barrier that such growing military dependence on the helots may have undermined. This policy need not have mandated the kind of wholesale massacre that Thucydides reports at 4.80.3–4 but may have been achieved by assassinations on a far smaller scale or even just the report of the slaughter of helots. As Stohl and Lopez have argued, a policy of terror very well may "have purposes wider than the simple destruction or harm that the brute force of violence creates. The goal includes carrying a

74 Whitby (1994) 98–9, at 98 quoting Powell (1988) 251. *Contra* Cartledge (1987) 175.

75 Paradiso (2004) 179.

76 Cf. Cartledge (2001b) 151.

77 Millender (2001) 146. See also Ducat (1990) 81; Cartledge (1987) 39–41; (2002) 215, 219, 266–7.

78 Cartledge (2002) 218–20, 267.

message of intimidation and the creation of fear in an audience whose behavior the perpetrator seeks to alter."[79] Thus even a single helot victim or the report of brutality against helots could serve "as a persuasive advertisement of the power of the state, and the message reaches more people than the government might elect to coerce through direct physical acts."[80] Here we have just such an advertisement, which has a spectacular quality in its recounting of numbers, its details about the selection process, its description of the helots' procession, and its mysterious conclusion. The report of the helot massacre that Thucydides received, in other words, may have been just that and nothing more—a report that aimed to advertise the Spartans' capacity for brutality, to remind the helots of their lack of self-determination, and to send shock waves through the helot population.[81]

It was the spectacular nature of Thucydides' account that clearly influenced Plutarch's later discussion in his *Lycurgus* of both the massacre and what is probably the most debated aspect of the Spartiates' relationship with the helots: the infamous *crypteia* (*Lyc*. 28.1–3 = Aristotle fr. 538 Rose):[82]

> The so-called 'crypteia' of the Spartans, if this is really one of Lycurgus' institutions, as Aristotle says, may have given Plato, too, this opinion of the man and his polity. The *crypteia* worked as follows. The authorities from time to time sent out into the country those deemed most resourceful of the young men, equipped with nothing other than daggers and essential rations. By day they dispersed into obscure places, hid themselves from sight and lay low; but at night they came down onto the roads and cut the throat of every helot they seized. Often, too, they ranged through the fields and did away with the strongest and best of them. Likewise, in his history of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides says that the helots who had been selected by the Spartans on account of their bravery crowned themselves as if they had been freed and went around the temples of the

79 Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 8–9.

80 Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 9. See also Claridge (1996) 52–3; Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 3; Schmid (2011b) 87.

81 On the possible Spartan origin of this report, see Paradiso (2004) 188, who argues that Thucydides' unusual use of the verb ἐπιτίθημι suggests an official Spartan source for this account. Cf. Whitby (1994) 98–9. See also Powell (1989a) 186–7, who believes that Thucydides "bought the Spartan line (or 'party line') on a number of issues." See also Powell (1988) 97, 219, cf. 228–9.

82 For Thucydides' influence on Plutarch's account at *Lyc*. 28, see Whitby (1994) 105.

> gods; but a little while later all disappeared, more than two thousand of them, in such a way that no one could say, either immediately or afterward, how they were killed.[83]

Like many Spartan institutions, we know relatively little about the *crypteia* thanks to the limited nature of the ancient evidence. While Cartledge believes that the *crypteia* was around in the time of Thucydides, our earliest extant evidence comes from Plato and Aristotle.[84] In his *Laws* (633b) Plato has the Spartan Megillus include the *crypteia* as an element of the Spartans' training in endurance. He claims that members of the *crypteia* went barefoot in winter, slept in the open, had no attendants, and roved through the countryside by night and by day. Our next source on the *crypteia* is the second-century Alexandrian scholar, Heraclides Lembus, who provides us with a number of fragments from Aristotle's now mostly lost *Politeiai*. One such fragment reports that Lycurgus' *crypteia* allowed men to go into the countryside and slaughter helots as they thought necessary (Heraclides Lembus 373.10 Dilts = Aristotle fr. 611.10 Rose).[85] Our final piece of evidence on the *crypteia* comes from Plutarch's biography of Cleomenes III (28.2–4 = Phylarchus *FGrH* 81 F 59). In his account of the battle of Sellasia in 222, Plutarch reports that Cleomenes employed the *crypteia* for reconnaissance work on the battlefield.[86] As this brief survey demonstrates, the evidence on helot-killing as a key part of the *crypteia* comes from Aristotle alone, via Heraclides Lembus and Plutarch's *Lycurgus*, and thus

83 Plut. *Lyc.* 28.1–3: ἡ δὲ καλουμένη κρυπτεία παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς, εἴ γε δὴ καὶ τοῦτο τῶν Λυκούργου πολιτευμάτων ἕν ἐστιν, ὡς Ἀριστοτέλης ἱστόρηκε, ταύτην ἂν εἴη καὶ τῷ Πλάτωνι περὶ τῆς πολιτείας καὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐνειργασμένη δόξαν. ἦν δὲ τοιαύτη· τῶν νέων οἱ ἄρχοντες διὰ χρόνου τοὺς μάλιστα νοῦν ἔχειν δοκοῦντας εἰς τὴν χώραν ἄλλως ἐξέπεμπον, ἔχοντας ἐγχειρίδια καὶ τροφὴν ἀναγκαίαν, ἄλλο δὲ οὐδέν· οἱ δὲ μεθ᾽ ἡμέραν μὲν εἰς ἀσυνδήλους διασπειρόμενοι τόπους, ἀπέκρυπτον ἑαυτοὺς καὶ ἀνεπαύοντο, νύκτωρ δὲ κατιόντες εἰς τὰς ὁδοὺς τῶν εἱλώτων τὸν ἁλισκόμενον ἀπέσφαττον. πολλάκις δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἀγροῖς ἐπιπορευόμενοι τοὺς ῥωμαλεωτάτους καὶ κρατίστους αὐτῶν ἀνῄρουν. ὥσπερ καὶ Θουκυδίδης ἐν τοῖς Πελοποννησιακοῖς ἱστορεῖ τοὺς ἐπ᾽ ἀνδρείᾳ προκριθέντας ὑπὸ τῶν Σπαρτιατῶν στεφανώσασθαι μὲν ὡς ἐλευθέρους γεγονότας καὶ περιελθεῖν τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἱερά, μικρὸν δὲ ὕστερον ἅπαντας ἀφανεῖς γενέσθαι, πλείονας ἢ δισχιλίους ὄντας, ὡς μήτε παραχρῆμα μήτε ὕστερον ἔχειν τινὰ λέγειν ὅτῳ τρόπῳ διεφθάρησαν.

84 Cartledge (2003a) 22. See also Vickers (1995) 354, who claims to have identified a reference to the *crypteia* in Aristophanes' *Birds* of 414 (l. 841). *Contra* Azoulay (2006) and Christien (2006) 176, who believe that Thucydides' and Xenophon's silence on this institution points to its development after the Spartans' loss of Messenia in 369.

85 See Ducat (2006a) 284.

86 On Cleomenes III's repurposing of the *crypteia*, see Kennell (2009) 174.

locates this picture of the *crypteia* in the period of extreme *oliganthrōpia* that Aristotle records in his *Politics* (1270a29–32).[87]

It is thus not surprising that this enforcement element of the *crypteia*—like pretty much every other aspect of this obscure institution—continues to invite debate.[88] Among the many reconstructions of the *crypteia* offered over the last twenty-five years, that of Jean Ducat most thoughtfully situates this institution into the intertwined contexts of Spartan social relations and the education of Spartiate males.[89] Ducat views this institution as a ritual, which functioned as the ultimate test of Spartiate youths in a process of initiation that played a key role in the creation of a Spartiate elite.[90] This ritual, for Ducat, entailed the dispatch, perhaps annually, of a dozen or so elite youths into the countryside, where they were to live for a certain amount of time under difficult conditions and to engage in the hunt for helots described by Aristotle.[91] It symbolically transformed young Spartiate males into beasts of prey who hunted by night and helots into their quarry.[92] The *crypteia* was thus one of several mechanisms by which the Spartans attempted to dehumanize the helots, if we credit Myron's claim that the Spartans obligated the helots to wear animal-skin caps and to wrap themselves in animal skins (*FGrH* 106 F 2).[93] Such acts of dehumanization not only strengthened the social divide between the Spartiates and the helots but also validated the use of violence against—and even murder of—members of this out-group.[94] The treatment of helots as veritable animals would not be surprising, given the role that dehumanization continues to play in modern state terror as a tactic aimed to rationalize violence.[95]

As for the mechanics of this "hunt," the Aristotelian fragments suggest that the killings of helots were random and not dictated by the qualities of particular

87 See above n. 60.

88 On the range of scholarly opinions on the *crypteia*, see Trundle (forthcoming).

89 See Ducat (2006a) 281–331; cf. Ducat (1974) 1456–60; (1990) 123–4.

90 See Ducat (1990) 123–4; (2006a) 309; cf. 324. On the elite nature of the *crypteia*, see Trundle (forthcoming).

91 Ducat (2006a) 296–7, 306.

92 On the helot-hunting aspect of the *crypteia*, see Ducat (1974) 1456–7, 1460; Vidal-Naquet (1986) 147–9; David (1989) 13.

93 On this passage from Myron, see Ducat (1974) 1456–8; (1990) 90–1, 107–8, 110–15, 119–22. Scholars have long described the caps as made of dogskin, but Ducat (1990) 113–5 argues that the Greek is less specific. See also Whitby (1994) 107. On the problems with this isolated fragment, see Ducat (1990) 119–21; Whitby (1994) 105, 125 n. 113.

94 See David (1989) 12–3.

95 Stohl (2006) 16.

helots. It is rather Plutarch who adds this gloss to the Aristotelian evidence, in his attempt to link the *crypteia* to the massacre described by Thucydides (*Lyc*. 28.3).[96] Aristotle, as Ducat argues, counters the traditional reading of the *crypteia* as a kind of secret police employed to keep an eye on the helots and to eliminate those identified as likely troublemakers.[97] The extent of Spartan territory and the Spartiates' chronic *oliganthrōpia* during the classical period also argue against the *crypteia*'s effective surveillance of the helots.[98] The growing imbalance in the ratio of helots to Spartiates could only have exacerbated both the challenges and the risks faced by the young Spartans dispatched into the countryside.

What we have in the *crypteia* is a far more complex institution that ideologically reified the Spartiates' subjugation of the helots and bolstered the fundamental structures of Spartan society.[99] As part of this symbolic reenactment of the Spartan social hierarchy, the young Spartiates' murder of helots aimed to reaffirm the norm that helots were not and could never become Spartans.[100] More important, for our purposes, is the *crypteia*'s performance of this ideological work through the terrorization of the helots in its gratuitous and random murder of unsuspecting victims.[101] As Lopez argues, such enforcement units have proved to be common and effective tools of terror in their ability to coerce the targeted community by means of threatened and actual violence.[102] The *crypteia*'s potential efficacy as an instrument of terror may explain Plutarch's claim that this institution emerged, not under Lycurgus, but in the middle of the fifth century as a Spartan response to the great helot revolt of the late 460s (*Lyc*. 28.6). It may also explain some scholars' belief that this institution developed as a terrorizing mechanism following the Thebans' liberation of Messenia in 369.[103] Even if the *crypteia* existed long before either of these crises, it would

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96 Ducat (2006a) 306.

97 Ducat (2006a) 321. For the traditional view of the *crypteia* as a kind of covert surveillance squad, see, e.g., Murray (1980) 179 ("secret society"); Michell (1952) 81 ("secret police"); and Cartledge (2003b) 70 ("Secret Operations Executive"), 236 ("Secret Service Brigade").

98 Cf. Talbert (1989) 33–4.

99 Cf. Ducat (2006a) 309. See also Ducat (1974) 1451–64; (1990) 123–5.

100 See Vernant (1989a) 200–201; Ducat (2006a) 322–3.

101 On the Spartan youths' terrorizing of the helots, see also David (1999) 124; Trundle (forthcoming). For interpretations of the *crypteia* that downplay or even dismiss the helot-hunting aspect of this institution, see, e.g., Talbert (1989) 34; Christien (2006) 176.

102 Lopez (1984) 63–4.

103 See, e.g., Azoulay (2006); Christien (2006) 176. For the range of theories on the evolution of the *crypteia*, see Trundle (forthcoming).

not be surprising if the Spartans later added helot-hunting to their arsenal of anti-helot measures or intensified their use of this practice in order to deal with the extraordinary dangers that they faced in both the late 460s and 369.[104]

One, finally, cannot help but note the spectacular nature of the terrorism inherent in Plutarch's image of young Spartiates suddenly descending onto the roads or traversing the fields on the lookout for helots (*Lyc*. 28.2–3). While these enforcement units may have occurred more sporadically than modern scholars assume or did not eliminate as many helots as the Aristotelian fragments suggest, the mere existence of such an organization or reports of its random killings could have provoked the same kind of terror that Thucydides' report would have produced. As Matthew Trundle rightly notes, the *crypteia*'s secrecy, randomness, and looming threat of violence made it the perfect mechanism for controlling the helots through fear:

> It is easy to envisage the power of this threat. Rumors of a group of men constantly alert to plots or even idle talk of revolution, from whom attack might come at any time and stories of the murders of unarmed and vulnerable helots working in the fields or out wandering at night, even if not true, would play on the minds of even the bravest helots, if not with regard to their own safety, for that of their families and friends.[105]

Even if the Messenian helots lived, as evidence now suggests, in agglomerated settlements rather than on widely dispersed farmsteads, the menace of the *crypteia* was undeniable.[106]

Another tool in the Spartan arsenal was the ephors' annual declaration of war against the helots, which enabled the Spartans to kill their slaves without incurring ritual pollution. Our earliest source on this practice is again Aristotle by way of Plutarch's biography of *Lycurgus* (28.4 = Aristotle fr. 538 Rose). Cartledge, however, believes that this declaration was likely in force already in the late fifth century, and Whitby argues that it may have been instituted as late as the 460s.[107] Whatever the case may be, here we again see the Lacedaemonians' employment of tactics against the helots that modern

104 Cf. Ducat (2006a) 306–7.

105 Trundle (forthcoming).

106 On helot settlements in small villages, see Alcock (2002) 190–8. See also Cartledge (2003a) 25.

107 See Cartledge (2003a) 22; Whitby (1994) 106. Cartledge (2001a) 148 believes that this declaration was particularly aimed against the Messenian helots. On this declaration see also

scholars view as standard operating procedures of state-sponsored terrorism.[108] In his list of the mechanisms that governments employ to expedite the policy and process of terror, Lopez includes governmental decrees or those forms of legislative action that legitimize other tools of terrorism and empower states to engage in such practices more freely and openly.[109] Just like its modern counterparts, the Spartans' formal declaration of war would have sanctioned the other mechanisms of terror described above—the random killings perpetrated by the *crypteia* as well as the massacre reported by Thucydides, if indeed it occurred.

As in the case of these other practices, the declaration of war was calculated to instill terror as it symbolically shored up Spartan domination. It would have sent a number of chilling messages to the helots, beginning with its presumption that such killings would be an ever-present part of their reality against which they would have no recourse. The declaration of war, however, not only alerted the helots to their Spartan masters' lack of compunction about such brutality but also signaled their own new status as enemy combatants. This practice, moreover, performed an important ideological function for the Spartans, by allowing them to conceptualize their domination of the helots as the product of legitimate and successful warfare.[110] Finally, the declaration of war, more than the other customs described above, clearly delineated the gulf between Spartiates and helots by imposing collective identities on both groups.[111] The distinction between "hunter" and "hunted" predicated on the *crypteia* now became the more legitimate opposition between Spartiate citizen-warriors and enemies of the state. Ducat, in his consideration of the implications of this systematic, gratuitous, and now legal process of eliminating inferiors, argues that

> from this perspective, what is fundamental is the declaration of war, which amounts to a 'licence to kill', . . . and hence a virtual death sentence

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Ste. Croix (1972) 92; (1981) 48, 149; Richer (1998) 249–51; Luraghi (2003) 132–3. For doubts concerning this declaration, see Birgalias (2002) 256.

108 See, e.g., Schmid (2011b) 69–70. Schmid provides a useful table (2.2) that is premised on his belief that the employment of persuasion and coercion in the political process takes place on three levels: (1) "persuasive politics," (2) "pressure politics," and (3) "violent politics." According to Schmid, the state uses a variety of legislative actions in each of these scenarios to deal with its opponents. See also Apter (1997).

109 Lopez (1984) 63–4.

110 Cf. Luraghi (2003) 133.

111 Luraghi (2002) 239.

> for anyone it designated 'the enemy'. Thus it underlines one of the basic norms of the helot's condition, and it is the Crypteia that turns this virtuality into reality. It is on this practice of killing that the fundamental ordering of Spartan society is established. For the helot, this is how his destiny is fulfilled; for the young Spartan who kills him, this is likewise his destiny, since the killing marks him definitively as a member of the superior community.[112]

Helot Terror?: Ritualized Contempt and the Crafting of the *Homoioi*

Another component of the Spartans' ongoing struggle to demarcate themselves from the helots and to bolster their domination is the series of rituals geared to institutionalize what Nino Luraghi has termed a "despicable collective identity for the helots, which was a mirror image of the Spartiates' image of themselves."[113] According to a number of ancient sources, the Spartans forced helots to provide lessons in their *syssitia* on behavior considered inappropriate for Spartan males. As Hodkinson has pointed out, it was likely the helot attendants who accompanied their masters to the *syssitia* who bore the brunt of this ritual humiliation.[114] The Spartans, we are told, forced these helots to drink large quantities of unmixed wine and would then bring them into the messes in order to show young Spartiates the meaning and dangers of drunkenness (Plut. *Lyc*. 28.4).[115] After describing this didactic spectacle of inebriated helots, Plutarch claims that the Spartans also forced the helots to perform vulgar and grotesque songs and dances. Songs and dances appropriate for free men were forbidden (*Lyc*. 28.4). Perhaps it was in this context that the Spartans forced the helots to wear the degrading animal-skin caps and coverings described by Myron (*FGrH* 106 F 2).[116]

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112 Ducat (2006a) 322. Cf. Vernant (1989a) 200–201.

113 Luraghi (2002) 234; cf. 239. See also Ducat (1990) 179. For detailed studies of these rituals, see Ducat (1974); (1990) 108–18; David (1989) 5–10.

114 Hodkinson (1997) 52. See also David (1989) 8, who suggests that the helots involved included bastard sons of Spartiate fathers and helot mothers.

115 Cf. Plut. *Demetr*. 1.5; *Mor*. 239a, 455e, 1067e.

116 See above n. 93. See Whitby (1994) 107, who views the Spartans' intoxication of the helots, imposition of beatings, and obligation of the helots to wear animal skins as "institutionalized mechanisms for reinforcing Spartan contempt."

As Ephraim David has argued, these ritualized displays of helot inferiority were aimed to promote an *esprit de corps* among the audience members of the *syssitia*. The shared laughter and derision of the Spartans toward the helots would have bolstered the feeling of social inclusion among the former and feelings of exclusion among the latter.[117] The Spartiates may have believed that this reinforcement of the social divide between themselves and the helots was particularly necessary in the case of their relations with those "domestic" helots that, as we have seen, could involve a high degree of interdependence and even intimacy.

In order to maintain this social gulf, the *syssitia*'s performances of helot humiliation created two mutually exclusive codes of conduct for the helot actors and their Spartan spectators. The helots' performance illustrated their servility, their lack of bodily integrity, and their lack of self-control. Such characteristics validated their domination by the Spartiates in the *syssitia*, who were expected to behave like free men, with decorum, moderation, and self-control—i.e. with the *sophrosyne* long associated with ancient Sparta.[118] This insistence on a strict boundary between helots and Spartans that extended to their physical comportment accords with Myron's claim that the Spartans had the authority to examine the helots' appearance, to kill those helots who possessed physical vigor improper to their servile condition, and to fine their masters for failing to curb their helots' growth (*FGrH* 106 F 2).[119] This ban on the helots' mimesis of Spartan behavior and physicality even extended to the songs they were allowed to sing, as Plutarch suggests in both his description of the helots' grotesque performances (*Lyc*. 28.4) and his account of helots captured during the Theban invasion of Laconia in 370/69 (*Lyc*. 28.5). According to Plutarch, when the Thebans ordered these helots to sing the poems of Terpander, Alcman, and Spendon the Laconian, the helots declined, saying that their masters did not wish it. On the basis of this report, Plutarch concludes that the gulf that lay between the Spartiates and their helots was vast indeed (*Lyc*. 28.5; cf. Critias 88 B37 D-K).

It is not surprising that these didactic spectacles of social differentiation occurred in the *syssition*, an institution at once linked to the Spartan military and a primary *locus* of Spartan socio-political activity.[120] Election to one of

117 David (1989) 7.

118 See, e.g., Archidamus' description of Spartan character at Thuc. 1.84. On these opposed codes of behavior, see David (1989) 9–10.

119 On this particular "crime" and its punishment, see Ducat (1990) 119–21.

120 For a detailed discussion of the *syssition*, see Singor (1999).

the Spartans' *syssitia* at the age of twenty or twenty-one signaled the young adult Spartiate's status as a full-fledged citizen warrior. Each Spartiate thereafter ensured his civic identity through monthly contributions of foodstuffs to his *syssition*. And throughout each Spartiate's life, the *syssition* performed key societal functions in its inculcation of civic values and promotion of the cooperative sociability that bound Sparta's *Homoioi* together.[121] At the *syssition* the ritual derision of helots served as one of a number of mechanisms geared to promote communality among its members, such as the requirement of a unanimous vote for the admission of new members and the strict confidentiality required concerning all discussions during its meetings (cf. Plut. *Lyc*. 12).[122]

These displays of helot humiliation, however, did far more than offer lessons to the Spartans on how not to act and what not to be. Coupled with the program of state terrorism against the helots, the displays had the added benefit of providing a terrifying spectacle of the consequences that lay in store for those citizens who failed to live up to the Spartiate code. While Spartiates may never have feared the possibility of becoming helots, they had good reason to be frightened by the variety of punishments meted out to those deemed guilty of behavior unfitting for a citizen, especially cowardice. As Xenophon makes clear, the punishments for such conduct conditioned the Spartans to prefer death to the disgrace that the coward would suffer (*Lac. Pol*. 9.1–2, 6). In his long list of the penalties awaiting cowards, Xenophon reveals that the Spartans created a line of demarcation between themselves and suspected cowards reminiscent, in certain respects, of the gulf that divided them from their helots (*Lac. Pol*. 9.3–5).[123] In addition to their exclusion from both *syssitia* and the gymnasium, cowards had to defer to all other citizens, including their juniors, and were forbidden from contracting marriages for themselves and their female relations. These Spartans, moreover, had to offer physical demonstrations of their dishonor in the form of a ban on both their adoption of a cheerful countenance and their imitation of honorable men. The beatings accorded to those who violated this final humiliation underline these Spartans' loss of bodily integrity and control. More significantly, such beatings may have closely linked Spartan cowards with helots, if we credit Myron's claim that the helots

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121 Millender (2011).

122 Cf. David (1989) 7.

123 On the Spartans' punishment of cowardice, see Millender (forthcoming). On the similarities between the Spartiates' degradation and the helots' humiliation, see David (1989) 15; Ducat (1990) 125–6.

received a certain number of beatings annually, regardless of any wrongdoing, as a reminder of their servile condition (*FGrH* 106 F 2).[124]

It is, however, Plutarch's account of the sanctions meted to cowards that most clearly emphasizes the physical degradation and almost servile status of those Spartiates judged guilty of this offense (*Ages*. 30.3):

> In fact, not only are these people excluded from holding any office, but it is considered improper to give a spouse to one of them, or to receive one through him. Anyone who encounters them is free to strike them if he so chooses. They have to resign themselves to going about in coarse and dirty clothing, to wearing patched and dull-colored mantles, and to shave only part of the beard, leaving the rest to grow.[125]

Both their possible beatings at the hands of any Spartiate and their obligation to wear a veritable uniform that advertised their inferiority could not help but link these men with the degraded helots that Myron describes (*FGrH* 106 F 2). Spartan cowards, of course, did not suffer the same degree of humiliation as those drunken helots paraded in the *syssitia*. Nevertheless, they would have offered a terrifying spectacle to any Spartiate who encountered them. Their punishment thus helps to explain the fate of Spartans like Aristodemus, who essentially committed suicide in battle as a response to the dishonor he suffered at home after his survival of the battle of Thermopylae (7.229–31; 9.71.2–4).[126]

The *syssitia*'s performances of helot humiliation, however, may have proved even more terrifying to those Spartiates who were in danger of losing their citizen status as a result of their lack of sufficient agriculturally productive land. Again, these citizens would not have feared demotion to helot status. The gulf between Spartiates and non-Spartiates, however, was immense, as Xenophon makes clear in his description of Cinadon's conspiracy in the early fourth century. While we should approach this account with caution, Xenophon

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124 Ducat (1974) 1458 and David (1989) 10 believe that these beatings of the helots functioned as a parody of the beatings Spartan boys received as part of a ritual connected with Artemis Orthia (cf. Xen. *Lac. Pol.* 2.9; Plut. *Lyc*. 18.1).

125 Plut. *Ages*. 30.3: οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἀρχῆς ἀπείργονται πάσης, ἀλλὰ καὶ δοῦναί τινι τούτων γυναῖκα καὶ λαβεῖν ἄδοξόν ἐστι· παίει δὲ ὁ βουλόμενος αὐτοὺς τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων. οἱ δὲ καρτεροῦσι περιιόντες αὐχμηροὶ καὶ ταπεινοί, τρίβωνάς τε προσερραμμένους χρώματος βαπτοῦ φοροῦσι καὶ ξυρῶνται μέρος τῆς ὑπήνης, μέρος δὲ τρέφουσι. For this translation, see Ducat (2006b) 6. David (1989) 15 associates the obligation to shave part of the coward's beard with the ephors' supposed proclamation upon entering office to the effect that citizens should shave off their mustaches and observe the laws (Plut. *Cleom* 9.3 = Aristotle fr. 539 Rose).

126 On Aristodemus, see Ducat (2005); (2006b) 34–8.

provides important details on the fate of those Spartiates who had failed to make their contributions to their *syssitia* and thus had lost their citizen rights (*Hell.* 3.3.5–6):

> Cinadon was a young man, sturdy in body and heart, but not one of the peers (*Homoioi*). And when the ephors asked how he had said that the plan would be carried out, the informer replied that Cinadon had taken him to the edge of the agora and bid him to count how many Spartiates there were in the agora. "And I," he said, "after counting king and ephors and members of the Gerousia and about forty others, asked 'Why, Cinadon, did you bid me to count these men?' And he replied: 'Consider these men,' he said, 'to be your enemies, and all the others who are in the agora, more than four thousand in number, to be your allies.'" In the streets also, the informer said, Cinadon pointed out as enemies here one and there two who met them, and all the rest as allies. And of all who chanced to be on the country estates belonging to the Spartiates, while there would be one whom he would point out as an enemy, namely the master, yet there would be many on each estate he pointed out as allies. And when the ephors asked how many Cinadon said there were who were privy to the plan, the informer replied that Cinadon said in regard to this issue that those who were privy to this information along with them and the other leaders were by no means many, though trustworthy. The leaders, however, put it this way, that it was they who knew the secret of all the others—helots and *neodamōdeis* and *hypomeiones* and *perioeci*. For whenever among these any mention was made of the Spartiates, no one was able to conceal the fact that he would gladly eat them raw.[127]

127 Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.5–6: οὗτος δ᾽ ἦν καὶ τὸ εἶδος νεανίσκος καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν εὔρωστος, οὐ μέντοι τῶν ὁμοίων. ἐρομένων δὲ τῶν ἐρόρων πῶς φαίη τὴν πρᾶξιν ἔσεσθαι, εἶπεν ὁ εἰσαγγείλας ὅτι ὁ Κινάδων ἀγαγὼν αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τὸ ἔσχατον τῆς ἀγορᾶς ἀριθμῆσαι κελεύοι ὁπόσοι εἶεν Σπαρτιᾶται ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ. καὶ ἐγώ, ἔφη, ἀριθμήσας βασιλέα τε καὶ ἐφόρους καὶ γέροντας καὶ ἄλλους ὡς τετταράκοντα, ἠρόμην· τί δή με τούτους, ὦ Κινάδων, ἐκέλευσας ἀριθμῆσαι; ὁ δὲ εἶπε· τούτους, ἔφη, νόμιζέ σοι πολεμίους εἶναι, τοὺς δ᾽ ἄλλους πάντας συμμάχους πλέον ἢ τετρακισχιλίους ὄντας τοὺς ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ. ἐπιδεικνύναι δ᾽ αὐτὸν ἔφη ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς ἔνθα μὲν ἕνα, ἔνθα δὲ δύο πολεμίους ἀπαντῶντας, τοὺς δ᾽ ἄλλους ἅπαντας συμμάχους· καὶ ὅσοι δὴ ἐν τοῖς χωρίοις Σπαρτιατῶν τύχοιεν ὄντες, ἕνα μὲν πολέμιον τὸν δεσπότην, συμμάχους δ᾽ ἐν ἑκάστῳ πολλούς. ἐρωτώντων δὲ τῶν ἐφόρων πόσους φαίη καὶ τοὺς συνειδότας τὴν πρᾶξιν εἶναι, λέγειν καὶ περὶ τούτου ἔφη αὐτὸν ὡς σφίσι μὲν τοῖς προστατεύουσιν οὐ πάνυ πολλοί, ἀξιόπιστοι δὲ συνειδεῖεν· αὐτοὶ μέντοι πᾶσιν ἔφασαν συνειδέναι καὶ εἵλωσι καὶ νεοδαμώδεσι καὶ τοῖς ὑπομείοσι καὶ τοῖς περιοίκοις· ὅπου γὰρ ἐν τούτοις τις λόγος γένοιτο περὶ Σπαρτιατῶν, οὐδένα δύνασθαι κρύπτειν τὸ μὴ οὐχ ἡδέως ἂν καὶ ὠμῶν ἐσθίειν αὐτῶν.

Immediately striking is the bitterness demonstrated by Cinadon, a physically fit young man who had landed on the other side of the gulf between full Spartiate citizens and everyone else in Lacedaemon. While Cinadon's hostility toward his former fellow citizens may be expected, far more surprising is his grouping of what seem to be widely divergent constituencies. It would seem that for at least Xenophon's Cinadon, the *hypomeiones*' relationship with the Spartiates differed little from that enjoyed by the helots.

Conclusion

Spartan state terror thus became a double-edged sword, both forged in response to and turned in on itself as a result of the Spartans' growing social, economic, and military dependence on the helots. The same terror that the Spartans directed toward their helots to bolster the gulf that theoretically lay between them served to alert those citizens teetering on the edge of disaster to the dangers they could incur through breaches of this boundary. And the policy of violence and degradation that validated the Spartans' domination of the helots likewise enabled the Spartiates to create yet another divide between themselves and those citizens who failed to live up to the Spartan code. While the Spartans do not appear to have employed such tactics in their dealings with the *hypomeiones*, Xenophon's account of Cinadon suggests that the *hypomeiōn*'s very demotion from citizen status was in itself the ultimate form of humiliation.

In the end, the Spartans' powerful combination of terror and ideological warfare proved successful in helping to maintain their domination and economic exploitation of the helots from the eighth century down to 369 in Messenia and for almost another two centuries in Laconia.[128] As Ducat has suggested, Spartan society as a whole was predicated on the effective application of ideological pressure—by the elite upon the commons, the males upon the females, the elders on the young, and Spartiate masters on their helots.[129] As I have argued above, the Spartans found terror to be an effective mechanism

128 Cf. Cartledge (1987) 176–7, who also points out the importance of the Spartans' policy of dividing and conquering the helots through the use of "differential promotion," i.e. manumission. See also Jordan (1990) esp. 52–4. *Contra* Talbert (1989) 32–3, who argues that the Spartans neither engaged in ideological warfare nor systematically tried to create differences among the helots.

129 Ducat (1978) 30 n. 86. See Cartledge (1987) 176.

for applying such pressure upon their ever-increasing and increasingly necessary helots. State terror, however, also allowed the shrinking citizen body to validate its fragile monopoly on power, as more and more Spartans lost citizen status and found themselves "on the wrong side of the tracks." Neither ideological warfare nor the policy of terror that facilitated it, however, could help the Spartan elite shore up a crumbling socio-political order and military complex situated upon a declining citizen base.

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CHAPTER 6

Alexander and "Afghan Insurgency": A Reassessment

Timothy Howe

Unlike many of the subjects under discussion by this volume, where the links between ancient behavior and the characteristics of terrorism and insurgency are far from clear, the connection between Alexander the Great and insurgency have deep historiographic roots, spanning a century or more.[1] The general perception is that 1) Alexander and his soldiers fought in "Ancient Afghanistan"[2] as they had never done before; 2) they adapted to fight an unconventional enemy (terrorists) in unconventional ways (counterinsurgency); and 3) the campaign was "legitimate" and as honorable as decisive battles such as Issus and Gaugamela.[3] That Alexander put down a "guerrilla"[4] insurgency in Bactria and Sogdiana—what is now Afghanistan (and small parts of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan)—has become so fixed in how we understand Alexander's story that by 2015, when Edward Anson wrote "Counter-Insurgency: The Lesson of

1 Guerrilla (or tribal) insurgency (rebellion/revolt) pervades the historiography of the last 120 years; e.g., Schwarz (1893) 93–5; Hogarth (1897) 230, 237; Rawlinson (1912) 43; Wilcken (1931) 144–9; Tarn (1948) 67–8; Fuller (1960) 117, 234–45; Milns (1968) 167; Green (1970) 187; Lane Fox (1973) 297, 305–19; Schachermeyr (1973) 341–7; Hammond (1980) 192–9; Bosworth (1988) 112, 117; Bloedow (1991a) 57; (1991b) 26–30; Holt (1993) 54–86; Badian (1994) 284; Bosworth (1996) 108; Hammond (1997) 144–59; Ashley (1998) 291–305; Harmatta (1999) 130; Sidky (2000) 61; Tanner (2002); Worthington (2004) 132–3; Lonsdale (2004) 152–7; Holt (2005) 67; Cartledge (2005) 124; Heckel (2008) 96; Smith (2009–10) 70; Worthington (2010) 121; Nawotka (2010) 272–84; Yenne (2010) 124; Engels (2012) 57; Balasevicius (2012) 34, 38–9; Anson (2013) 169; (2015a) 101–2.

2 Or Turkistan. See Schwarz (1893) 93–5.

3 Boot in his history of unconventional warfare frames the issues in these terms (2013) 4–7. Recent studies of Alexander's policy of "counterinsurgency," such as Holt (2005) 67, Lonsdale (2007) 95–87, and Anson (2015a), do much the same, while Worthington (2010) appends the twenty-first century notion of "nation-building" to Alexander's list of goals and accomplishments for "Afghanistan." Worthington (2010) and Anson (2015a) 100 even go further and incorporate moral elements in their assessment of Alexander's actions.

4 Revolt and rebellion are the preferred terms of pre-1960s historiography. See Antela-Bernárdez (2000) for the ways in which "guerrilla" comes to be embedded in the Alexander scholarship.

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Alexander the Great," using the term "insurgency" was not even questioned.[5] Despite over a century of deep analysis on every other conceivable aspect of Alexander's actions, policy, behavior, and character, fighting rebel insurgents in "Afghanistan" is not disputed.[6]

Consider, for example, Salvatore Vacante's insightful and critical study of Alexander's sieges in Sogdiana in 329/8 BCE. Although Vacante questions the scholarly consensus that Alexander's counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy was wholly a product of his military supremacy, he nonetheless accepts wholesale, and without argument, that Alexander was in fact using COIN against an insurgency led by the "rebellious" tribes in Sogdiana.[7] Such uncritical acceptance and scholarly consensus is fairly unique among ancient historians, especially those who study Alexander the Great, and is itself worthy of note. But this uncritical consensus is by no means the most troubling aspect of the modern historiography. In their analyses of the eastern legs of Alexander's invasion of the Persian Empire, scholars have begun to mine Alexander's campaigns for their value in *predicting* current, twenty-first century insurgent action in the region.

Alexander's COIN policy is regularly deployed to inform contemporary military policy by both professional academics and military policy analysts. Indeed, so linked have Alexander's fourth century experiences become with modern concepts such as insurgency and counterinsurgency that USArmy COIN policy analysts such as Major Tony Balasevicius argue for greater study of Alexander's strategies and tactics *because* of their predictive value.[8] From the academic side, military historian David Lonsdale goes so far as to call for a general reassessment of COIN theory *because* Alexander's experiences render current studies inadequate.[9] That is, Lonsdale argues that current COIN policy simply is not nuanced enough to capture the full range of counterinsurgency tactics

5 Anson (2015a) 100–1, for example, is simply one of the most recent scholars to provide no citations, ancient or modern, to justify his usage of terms like revolt or insurgency. Such terms would be more meaningful, however, if the authors included, for example, some analysis of Arrian's word choice and then made the linguistic and contextual arguments to underpin their terminology. One might plausibly argue, for example, that in 4.1.5 of the *Anabasis* the noun formed from ἀφίσταμαι should be translated "rebellion" or "insurgency" instead of "withdrawal" or "resistance." See n. 97 below.

6 Consider, for example, the ways in which scholars have parsed out Alexander's divinity (references in Howe 2013a), or his experimentation with *proskynesis* (references in Bowden 2013).

7 Vacante (2012) 102–3.

8 Balasevicius (2012). See also Naiden (2013).

9 Lonsdale (2007) 95–7.

available and must be revised so that Alexander's experiences can teach present policy-makers *and* historians how to understand Afghan insurgents over the last 2000 years properly.[10] The syllogism Londsdale constructs works thusly: 1) Alexander engaged in COIN; 2) current COIN theory is not flexible enough to encompass Alexander's experiences; consequently, 3) COIN theory must be modified. These calls for relevance should raise warnings about unsupported assumptions, circular arguments and thereby bring into question the easy connections between Alexander the Great and insurgency.

This is not to say history cannot be relevant, or that models and analogy must be eschewed. Certainly, theoretical modeling and historical analogy have value to historians of every period, but they can fail us in two particulars: 1) The nuances of behavior cannot be understood in full without context—attitudes, policies and behaviors were neither constant over time nor universal in adherence, despite the fact that they were executed in similar geographic areas.[11] 2) Modern place names, concepts, and terms, when deployed uncritically and without evidence or argument (e.g., Afghanistan, insurgency, guerrilla, COIN), impose boundaries, physical and metaphorical, on historical situations that were not present in the original evidence and were inconceivable to ancient actors like Alexander and his command staff. At best, the imprecision generated by uncritical analogy clouds understanding and can distract from the main historical questions—in this case questions about Alexander's actions and the policy behind them (not to mention the nature of enemy actions and policies). At worst, such imprecision contaminates the Alexander story and sources with alien (i.e., twentieth/twenty-first century) contexts.[12] If the aim is to impose theoretical frameworks, scholars should act consciously, and in methodologically sound and informed ways. If the aim is to understand Alexander and the historical contexts of insurgency (and insurgency models) then we should start with an understanding of why and how Alexander the Great's campaigns became persistently linked with insurgency.

Indeed, a reassessment of Alexander's efforts to conquer Bactria and Sogdiana can offer an opportunity to reevaluate narratives and refine our understanding of ancient Macedonian and Persian actions. Such a reassessment may also initiate a critical conversation about the ways in which

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10 Lonsdale (2007) 95–7 criticizes Thompson's (1966) assertion that counterinsurgency is effective because it is grounded in political, social or economic prestige. According to Lonsdale, Alexander's COIN succeeded against the "Afghan guerrillas" because of his superior military force alone.

11 See Antela-Bernárdez (2014) for further analysis of this "geographic determinism."

12 So argues Antela-Bernárdez (2014) 77.

insurgency and counterinsurgency theory might (and might not) provide insight into Alexander the Great's policy and actions. Only then, after we have gained a critical understanding of both the evidence behind, and the scholarly study of, warfare in the time of Alexander the Great, can we begin to consider how Alexander's experiences might inform current contexts.

Constructing Insurgency: "Modern" Invasions of Afghanistan

Alexander's campaigns in Bactria and Sogdiana seem to have held a special resonance in the English- and German-speaking worlds over the last 100 or so years, perhaps because they can easily serve as comparanda to military action during the three Anglo-Afghan Wars of 1838–1842, 1878–1880, and 1919[13] and the US-led 2001 Operation Enduring Freedom and its North Atlantic Treaty Alliance Organization (NATO) successors.[14] In fact, the earliest Anglophone narrative that links Alexander's Eastern campaign with a hill-tribe rebellion, D. G. Hogarth's *Philip and Alexander of Macedon: Two Essays in Biography*, implied a direct analytic connection between the Anglo-Afghan wars and Alexander's eastern campaigns by asserting, "The hillmen on the northern streams of the Cabul basin gave Alexander, as they have given every invader since his time, some very tough fighting [sic]."[15] Hogarth's discussion of the inhospitable mountainous and "desert" terrain stages the "rebels" to be desperate, uncivilized people who cause problems for any Western, civilizing power. Despite this unorganized prowess, however, the uncivilized will naturally succumb to Alexander's superior, civilizing force in the end.[16] Elsewhere during his analysis of the fighting, Hogarth went so far as to single out the unique nature of Alexander's campaign for the Western Powers, calling it a "difficult and new" way of fighting for Europeans, a fighting that contained a desperate, unscrupulous enemy that forced Alexander to act with "severity harsher

13 Many of the framers of British policy on the eve of the Anglo-Afghan Wars were steeped in Alexander lore and apt to find parallels and justifications among the histories of the Macedonian King, Dalrymple (2013) 49–65. See Coloru (2009) 25–63 for a discussion of the influence of Russian and British expansionism in Central Asia on the Alexander historiography.

14 So Victor Hanson (2002); (2004), at the extreme edge of the conversation, would argue, stressing the moral imperative of Western action against insurgents in Afghanistan.

15 Hogarth (1897) 237. For an assessment of Hogarth and his impact on Alexander scholarship see Borza (1978).

16 See Antela-Bernárdez (2014) 81–2.

than his usual wont," as others will be forced to do whenever they venture into the region.[17] Hogarth's contemporary, Friedrich von Schwarz argued much the same.[18]

In direct contrast to Hogarth's scrofulous, uncivilized hill-tribe rebellion, George Grote, who wrote his history of Greece in 1853, before any British military action in Afghanistan, viewed the peoples of the Eastern Persian Empire as no different from those living in Mesopotamia, Egypt, or Anatolia. For Grote, Alexander's actions in the eastern satrapies (provinces) were an integrated component of his conquest of the Persian Empire. Unlike Hogarth, Grote did not draw historical analogies, did not engage contemporary groups in the region but simply adheres to the descriptions of the ancient literary sources. In short, Grote did not see the eastern campaign as anything markedly different from the rest of the campaign, except observing that Alexander had to fight more often than he may have wished.

Grote's measured analysis of Alexander's campaign deploys vocabulary like "conquest," "subdue," "subjugation," to explain Alexander's actions and "resistance" to describe those who opposed him.[19] Indeed, the word "revolt" is used only once, and appropriately, when Grote observes that the 7 towns near Cyropolis threw off their garrisons as part of a revolt by "previously conquered people" who had been reorganized by Alexander.[20] For Grote, the resistance to Alexander derived from a multiplicity of locations—hill, vale, and plain—and a multiplicity of causes—ambition, revenge, opportunism—as it does for the ancient authors. In addition, Grote's text is devoid of pejorative depictions of the enemy and does not assign Alexander the role of civilizer. Grote's contemporary, the German historian Johann Gustav Droysen used similar language and tone, likewise keeping closely to the descriptions offered by the literary sources and not interpolating from current events (perhaps, as with Grote, because there were none that offer ready comparison).[21]

By juxtaposing several passages from different eras of Alexander scholarship, both English and German, we can see clearly the ways in which the main interpretation has remained surprisingly true to Hogarth's original argument—hill

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17 Hogarth (1897) 230–7.

18 von Schwarz (1883) 95.

19 Grote (1853) 200–14.

20 Grote (1853) 205. Alexander had previously rounded up the population and organized them into fortified garrisons. See discussion, below.

21 Droysen (1833).

"guerrillas," new warfare, revolt[22]—even though the descriptive language has been updated to fit current conflicts.

> Not only was the quality of the enemy different from before, but their mode of fighting differed. Here in Eastern Iran no great battles were offered to Alexander, such as he had hitherto won—principally by the same method of the "oblique" battle-formation in which the army he had inherited from Philip was particularly well drilled; it was a **genuine people's war** which awaited him. The enemy was difficult to get hold of; they never opposed him in large numbers, but as soon as he advanced, they appeared in his rear, if possible in several places simultaneously; they made a fresh rising; they entrenched themselves in inaccessible rocky recesses, or, if in danger, vanished into the Turkoman steppes, only to break out again suddenly and make a surprise attack upon him. How dangerous and exhausting such a **guerrilla war** may be, is shown by the fighting of Napoleon in Spain, in which he was unable to get the upper hand.[23]

> The Macedonians were now advancing into regions where towns, as a Westerner would conceive them, were largely non-existent, and of which their geographical knowledge was hazy in the extreme. Here they endured three years of mountain **guerrilla** fighting (330–27) from Afghanistan to Bukhara, from Lake Seistan to the Hindu Kush, against the fierce, most indomitable opposition Alexander had yet been called upon to face. Bessus, and his successor Spitamenes, were fighting a **nationalist war**, with strong religious overtones; between them they gave Alexander more continuous trouble than all the embattled hosts of Darius.[24]

> Perhaps early in October 330 Alexander proceeded south from Artacoana. Over the next three years he passed through Drangiana, Arachosia and Paropamisadae, then over the Hindu Kush Mountains to Bactria and

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22 Later authors build on Hogarth's framework in slightly different ways, with the language updated to reflect current vocabularies, rooted in current engagements in Central Asia. See n. 1, above for full citations.

23 Emphasis added, Wilcken (1931) 144–5. Quote from English translation of G. C. Richards (1967) 154–5. Compare Fuller (1960) 117, "In this theatre the whole mode of fighting was to differ from what it had been. No great battles awaited Alexander; he was to be faced by a people's war, a war of mounted guerrillas who, when he advanced, would suddenly appear in his rear, who entrenched themselves on inaccessible crags, and when pursued vanished into the Turkoman steppes."

24 Emphasis added, Green (1970) 187.

> Sogdiana and back again to his new foundations of the Alexandria–by–the Caucasus (near modern Begram and Charikar). These vital years saw him adapting brilliantly to meet and overcome **unprecedented** political and military conditions: vigorous local **nationalism**, rugged and often appallingly difficult mountainous terrain, plus all the uncertainties of **guerrilla warfare**.[25]

> Alexander faced the same dilemma as modern tacticians whose high-tech hammers have so often pummeled fruitlessly ... Alexander's genius and adaptability led him to try a more diffuse, mobile response to the **insurgency**. This strategy imposed greater responsibility on the king's officer corps and pushed his troops to endure prolonged danger and privation. The experience changed history but also the men who made it. This **new phase** of the operation began when Alexander divided his forces in a bold effort to smother the rebellion.[26]

All four authors in this survey stress the newness and/or difficulty of guerrilla war for Alexander. What is significant for our purposes is that the hostility and severity of this rebellion seems to evolve over time. With this in mind we might map the historiographic evolution of the "Afghan rebellion" against Alexander thusly: revolt and rebellion (in contrast to Grote and Droysen's "resistance") seem to enter the narrative with Schwarz (1893) and Hogarth (1897) in the 1890s; guerrilla war and nationalism (people's war) with Wilcken in the 1930s; insurrection with Bosworth (1988) in the 1980s; and insurgency and counterinsurgency with Bloedow (1991b) and Holt (1993) (among others) in the 1990s. Finally, by the time Sidky (2000), Holt (2005), and Anson (2015) write, Alexander is regularly described using counterinsurgency tactics against highly organized guerrilla insurgents, just like current NATO commanders in Afghanistan. The fact that none of the ancient Alexander sources support these shifts in terminology (or, indeed, their original adoption)—and the fact that none of these authors cited here ground their use of such terms as guerrilla warfare, people's or nationalist war, insurgency, or counterinsurgency in scholarly argument or literary evidence[27]—raises many questions. Embedded terms like "insurgency" are not mere *vocabulary updates*; they have specific meaning, at specific periods to specific audiences, and engage specific contexts.[28]

25 Emphasis added, Cartledge (2005) 124.

26 Emphasis added, Holt (2005) 67.

27 See Antela-Bernárdez (2000) for further discussion on how the Spanish term "guerrilla" came into the Alexander historiographic tradition.

28 Brice, chapter one in this volume.

So, why the sea change in historiography with Hogarth and, more importantly, why do we not see a return to Grote and Droysen's closer reading of the sources in the 100+ years after Hogarth? Perhaps the answer is as simple as Western powers during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have found themselves in Alexander the Great's sandals and therefore Central Asia has become relevant to historians and their audiences (academic and otherwise) in ways that the region had not done in Grote and Droysen's day. In fact, one can trace a progression in the attention devoted to Central Asia over time: as the Great Powers become more and more closely drawn into Afghanistan, Alexander's campaigns seem to become relevant in the different historiographical narratives in ways that could be said to parallel current events. As a result, by the late 1940s, Tarn contextualizes Spitamenes and his compatriots as independence-seeking rebels against a benevolent imperial power, not unlike those agitating for independence in contemporary British India.[29] Likewise, during the twentieth century, Soviet scholarship seems to downplay Alexander's achievements—perhaps in an effort to lower the significance of a revered figure in the Western consciousness—and later, when Central Asia becomes directly relevant to Soviet policy, Soviet Alexander scholarship deepens the criticism of Alexander's achievements, perhaps in an attempt to underscore the unique achievements of Soviet interventions in the region. Soviet power now does what Alexander the Great could not.[30] And after 2001, in the wake of the US-led invasion of Afganistan, Frank Holt uses Alexander to offer commentary on NATO's struggles in the region by observing that Alexander was right to initiate a "total war" against the Sogdians after they terrorized the Macedonian forces at the Polytimetos River—a detachment of Macedonians was ambushed and massacred by the "insurgents" led by Spitamenes.[31] In 2015 we can see Edward Anson describing Alexander as winning "hearts and minds" in Afghanistan two millennia before David Petreus, Supreme Allied Commander for NATO deployed the same strategy among the "same" populations.[32] So too, we can see Major Tony Balasevicius opine that Alexander employed the most up-to-date COIN theory as he planned his response to Spitamenes' insurgency:

29 Tarn (1948) 59–68. Tarn concludes that now Alexander is "Great King by right of conquest (59)"; and he has little patience for the various hill-dwelling barbarians who "rebel" against Alexander's rightful authority (67–8). Some of this indignation seems to linger in more recent studies, e.g. Anson (2013) 169.

30 See Rtveladze (2007) 194–5, for the relevant bibliography and an assessment of its scope and approach.

31 Holt (2005) 105. See also Holt (2005) 56–8, 107.

32 Anson (2015a) 98, 100. Cf. Naiden (2013).

> Although these battles [against the Sogdian insurgents] were relatively minor affairs, they forced Alexander to confront the fact that he was fighting a completely different type of war than he was accustomed to, meaning he would have to adjust his operational approach. . . . Alexander's solution to the problem was both innovative and simple. He would attempt to limit the mobility of the enemy while denying them their support base. To accomplish this, Alexander established a number of fortified garrisons throughout the region at specific intervals on dominating terrain. He then divided a large part of his force into mobile columns that had the task of raiding enemy camps and rounding up the population.[33]

With Balasevicius we come to the most advanced "usage" of the Alexander story: Alexander's experiences in the eastern Persian Empire can teach modern actors and policy framers how to fight Afghans.

In the end, it is clear that "insurgency," "rebellion," "guerrilla," "counterinsurgency," and even "Afghanistan," and "Afghans" have been deployed uncritically. It is not sufficient to assume, as Anson does for example, that just because US Army General David Petreus and Alexander the Great fought in the same valleys that they had the same goals, methods, policies and needs.[34] A reassessment and re-centering is needed. Clear definitions, historical context, and primary source evidence must be brought to bear in order to return analytic authority to the conversation.

Alexander and the East: Framing the Conversation

As Lee Brice argues in the Introduction to this volume, it is best to see insurgency as "a revolt or rebellious movement intended to overturn or eliminate a constituted government or authority by subversion and military force."[35] Under this definition, accepted by most modern governments, the US Army and NATO, the majority of Alexander's opponents during his conquest of the Persian Empire cannot be said to fight an insurgency (or rebellion) against him because they did not recognize Alexander's authority, his "constituted government." To the Persians, Alexander was simply an invader and the Persians fought a war of resistance rather than a war of rebellion.

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33 Balasevicius (2012) 38. Vacante (2012) 89 questions these tactics, not in terms of their newness, as such, but whether the resistance forced any changes in Alexander's approach.

34 *Pace* Anson (2015a).

35 Brice, chapter one, this volume.

This might seem a small, somewhat obvious point, but it is worth stressing, because nearly all of the scholarship after Droysen and Grote assume without argument or documentation that the Persian subjects in the Eastern Empire rebelled against Alexander's legitimate rule.[36] For the most part, they write as Tarn does, "Alexander was now Great King by right of conquest."[37] For Tarn, Alexander's claim to the Empire was legitimate just because Alexander had claimed it to be legitimate. Tarn, however, is incorrect. Alexander's claim to be Great King did not make him a legitimate king in the eyes of the Persians. More to the point, Alexander's announcement did not even make his claim over the entire Persian Empire legitimate. Those who remained loyal to the previous regime in the unconquered sections of the Persian Empire were, by definition, loyalists, not rebels, and so should not be categorized as insurgents. The Bactrians and Sogdians were loyal subjects of the legitimate king, Artaxerxes V, known to the Alexander sources as Bessus.

The fourth century Aramaic leather dispatches from the Khalili Archive make the Bactrian loyalty to the new king Artaxerxes very clear.[38] Among these unique and precious contemporary sources, we can see Bessus using the dynastic name Artaxerxes V, requisitioning supplies from his loyal subjects, as he moves across Bactria into Sogdiana, fighting Alexander's invasion of the Persian Empire.[39] Document IA from the archive is especially significant because it mentions place names, one of which, Aornus, figures prominently in the Alexander sources as an initial center for resistance to the Macedonian conquest:[40]

> In the month of Kislev, year 1 of Arta[erxes] the King.
> Provisions in Maithanaka for Ba[yasa], when
> he passed from Baktra to Varnu (Aornus):
> 1 horse
> 1 sheltered bovine …
> [text goes on for 45 lines of supplies]
> Provisions in Maithanaka for Bayasa, when
> he passed from Baktra to Varnu (Aornus).

36 See note 1, above.

37 Tarn (1948) 59.

38 Naveh and Shaked (2012). Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1999) 91–112; Briant (2002) 745–6, 866; Tuplin (2014) 672.

39 See Mairs (2014) 30–3 for further discussion of Bessus' authority and relationship with local authorities.

40 Aornus was the principal fortress of Bactria. Arr. 3.29.1. Bosworth (1980) 372.

So much for the Bactrian (and Sogdian) perspective. So much for them *self-identifying* as rebels or insurgents, as is often claimed from Hogarth to Holt.[41] But what of Alexander's own understanding of the Eastern Campaign? Again, we are fortunate in having contemporary documents to offset the Alexander bias of the later literary sources.[42] The pro-Alexander Babylonian Chronicle (*BCHP* 1.3–6), and therefore, Alexander himself[43] understands Bessus as a legitimate claimant to the Persian throne and acknowledges that the Eastern subjects considered him Great King of Persia:[44]

> (3.) [Month IV (July): Darius the king, from] his throne they removed him. Be[ssus] (4.) [sat on the throne and Artaxerxes] **as his name they named him**,[45] and Alexander and his troops (5.) [pursued Bessus the king. **Alexander with] his few troops with the troops [of Bessus made battle.]** (6.) [Bessus] killed [Darius the king].[46]

From the time of Bessus' accession to the throne, then, the inhabitants of the Eastern Persian Empire were united in fighting a war against a foreign conqueror in the same way as their western counterparts had done when Darius III had worn the upright tiara. Indeed, the Babylonian Chronicle even stresses that Alexander battled Bessus just as he had battled Darius III. To put it another way, the communities of Bactria and Sogdiana were not behaving any differently from their counterparts in the western sections of the Empire, in Lykia and Pisidia (Arr. 1.26.5–29.2; Curt. 3.1.6–9), or those near the Persian Gates,[47] for example, when Alexander came to town. As Pierre Briant warns, "We must not see this [i.e., Bessus' accession to the throne] as setting in motion a 'war of nationalism' that would ultimately give way to a permanent

41 Hogarth (1897); Holt (2005).

42 See Welch and Mitchell (2013) for a discussion of the Roman lens and issues of historical context connected to the Roman-era literary narratives.

43 See Van der Spek (2003) 289–346, for further discussion of Alexander's relationship to and influence on, the Babylonian Chronicle in this period.

44 Diodorus Siculus 17.74.1 agrees: "[Bessus] being known to everyone because of his administration, now called on the population to defend their freedom."

45 Emphasis added. See Van der Spek (2003) for why the restoration of Artaxerxes here is in no way problematic.

46 Translation and text courtesy of Livius.org, http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/bchp-alexander/alexander_06.html.

47 Uxians: Arr. 3.17.1; Diod. Sic. 17.67.4–5; Curt. 5.3.4–19. Persian Gates: Arr. 3.18; Curt. 5.3.17–6.1; Diod. Sic. 17.70.1–6.

'Bactrian Independence'."[48] Bessus was not creating a resistance insurgency; he could not have done so in Bactria and Sogdiana even if he had desired that. Bactria and Sogdiana had not been conquered by Alexander, had not submitted to Alexander's authority, and had not officially and publically recognized Alexander's sovereignty over the Persian Empire.[49] To say otherwise is to distort the historical record.

Since the simplest explanation is usually the best, we should observe that the Bactrians and Sogdians were fighting a *resistance* movement against Alexander the foreign invader in support of Darius' successor Artaxerxes V. Moreover, just because the Greek and Latin literary sources claim there were no decisive battles between Bessus and Alexander (the Babylonian Chronicle suggests otherwise) does not mean that Bessus was not legitimate, that Alexander's conquest of the Persian Empire had "changed" nature or orientation, or that the nature and tone of Persian resistance to that conquest had changed, at least for the Persians living in the East. As Briant observes, there is no evidence to warrant seeing Bessus' accession as a move for Bactrian independence,[50] or indeed anything other than continued resistance to Alexander's invasion.

For his part, Alexander, too, did not invent new tactics to put down Eastern resistance to his conquest; he fell back on tradition. The Macedonians had been fighting mountain people in their strongholds in the Balkans for generations,[51] and in the homeland, controlling mountain groups had evolved to a fine art: drive enemies into their mountain fastnesses, use terror to make a violent example of those who could be caught,[52] and then contract a strategic marriage with a local warlord, which alliance would either convert the war into a local problem or resolve it altogether.[53] Even the setting up of towns—i.e., all of the Alexandrias[54]—which Lonsdale and others[55] see as so unusual to this Eastern leg of Alexander's campaign, have deep roots in previous

48 Briant (2002) 871.

49 See Turner, this volume, for a discussion of the characteristics inherent in independence insurgencies.

50 As does Wilcken (1931) 147.

51 Hammond (1966); Cabanes (1988); Greenwalt (2010).

52 See discussion of Thebes, below.

53 See Carney (2000) 19, 25; Ogden (2010) 3–29; for this practice among the Argeads pre-Alexander III. Alexander himself used dynastic marriage on the eve of the Illyrian campaign of 334: Arr. 1.5.1.

54 Bosworth (1988) 245–50; Fraser (1996).

55 Lonsdale (2007); Holt (2005).

Macedonian policy.[56] Philip II, for example, set up Philippoi, to deal with fractious groups threatening the revenue from the mines of Pangaion—and the settlers who worked those mines (Diod. Sic. 16.37), and later Philippopolis (modern Plovdiv), to settle Thracian hill peoples and thereby allow Philip to have clear communication and supply routes as he campaigned among the cities on the Bosphorus (Theopompus, *FGrH* 115 F 217–18). Alexander, too, followed his father's example in early 340, when, as Regent, he pacified the hill-dwelling Maidi, another Thracian tribe in the Upper Strymon River Valley (Plut. *Alex*. 9.1).[57] This new town, Alexandropolis, garrisoned the region and allowed for a rapid response and clear supply lines should Alexander need to move into Thrace in the future.[58]

But what about the "Afghan" enemy? Was the enemy Alexander faced in the Eastern Persian Empire of a markedly different character from others the Macedonians has faced, and were the enemy's tactics as unique to Alexander's experience as is presented in the scholarship?[59] No. Alexander had faced similar conditions fighting the Illyrians in 335/4, in the first year of his reign when he was much weaker and inexperienced than he was in 329/8, when he moved against Bessus and Spitamenes.[60]

In the first year of his reign, while Alexander was campaigning in Thrace, not far from Alexandropolis, he received news that Kleitos, newly self-proclaimed king of the Dardani[61] and son of the Bardylis who had ravaged the army and territories of Philip II's brother, Perdikkas III (Diod. Sic. 16.4.4–7; Just. 8.6.3), had made an alliance with the king of the Taulantii with an eye towards invading Macedonia while Alexander was distracted elsewhere. Between them, the two had agreed to carve out what territory they could from the weak new Macedonian king (Arr. 1.5.1).[62] Since he could not disengage from the Thracians and deal with the Illyrians directly, Alexander opted for a policy he would later use in a similar situation in Sogdiana, with Oxyartes and his daughter

56 Lonsdale (2007); Fraser (1996). Cf. Bosworth (1988) 247, who argues that the city foundations by Alexander in 330 in Areia and further east were triggered by conditions similar to those in the Balkans: hostile locals and the need to secure important resources and transit routes. For the pre-Alexander nature of such establishments see Lane Fox (2011a) 229 for Amyntas III and Pydna; Koukouli-Chrysanthaki (2011) 440 for Philip and Philippoi.

57 Bosworth (1988) 245–6.

58 Which he did in the first year of his campaign. See Howe (2015a) for further discussion.

59 E.g., Balasevicius (2012) 38, "they forced Alexander to confront the fact that he was fighting a completely different type of war than he was accustomed to."

60 See Hammond (1974); (1977) for an analysis of the Illyrian campaigns of 334.

61 Bosworth (1980) 69.

62 Bosworth (1980) 65–73. For Alexander's weakness in his first year see Howe (2015b).

Rhoxanne: Alexander bound the most powerful chieftain of the region, the Agrianian king Langaros, to his cause by offering a marriage with the Argead royal family, in this case Alexander's own half-sister Kynna (Arr. 1.5.4).[63] The binding of the Agrianian king and an Illyrian-Macedonian princess (Kynna was the daughter of Philip II and Audata an Illyrian noblewoman) was a clever move and it ensured the Agrianians' loyalty for the rest of Alexander's life.[64] It not only sent a clear message to the Illyrians that Alexander would not ignore their actions but also allowed Alexander time to pacify Thrace before turning to Illyria.

Once Thrace was in order, however, Alexander moved as quickly as he could to meet the Illyrians in their own territory with his new Agrianian allies, a people confortable with, and knowledgeable about mountain fighting. In the narrows of a place called Pellion, where Kleitos the Illyrian had a fortified position, Alexander arrived just in time to prohibit the two Illyrian forces from joining. Unfortunately, Alexander was himself trapped between their armies, in a narrow river valley (Arr. 1.5.5–11). At this point, after attempting to break out and losing men and his strategic position, Alexander was forced to make a tactical retreat, cross the river and fall back closer to the Macedonian border, a strategy his army would use again in Sogdiana, after the debilitating defeat at the Polytimetos River in 328 (Arr. 4.5.1–6.2; Curt 7.7.30–39).[65] Once in a new position, Alexander deployed his archers and mountain-savvy Agrianian infantry to make a night attack on those Illyrians who remained outside the fortress of Pellion. After driving the enemy inside, cutting down any stragglers and placing their bodies to serve as a warning to others, Alexander retreated home, leaving only a small force to keep watch on the enemy fortress. In frustration, Kleitos the Illyrian burned Pellion and retreated into the mountains, where he would disappear, never to trouble Alexander again (Arr. 1.6.11). What is interesting here, for the purpose of understanding the Eastern Campaign, is that Alexander and his soldiers had experience adapting to a mobile, mountain enemy. Fighting the Bactrians and Sogdians in their mountain retreats was not new.

Throughout the Persian campaign, Alexander will refine these mountain-fighting tactics: in Pisidia, in the Zagros Mountains at the Persian Gates (Polyaen. *Strat.* 4.3.27; Arr. 3.18.2–6, 7–9; Curt. 5.3.17, 23; 5.4.1, 3–4, 10–11, 14,

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63 See Howe (2015b) 140–2 for the chronology of these events.

64 See Howe (2009) 222, 224 for the close connections between Alexander and his Agrianian infantry.

65 Hammond (1991) 41–7.

17, 20, 27–3),[66] with the Uxii, with the Sogdians, and with the Indians in the Swat Valley.[67] From the beginning of his reign, Alexander seems comfortable 1) using tricks to force his opponents into precipitous action; 2) engaging in a night attacks; and 3) retreating without a decisive victory (without any decisive battle at all), and thereby letting the enemy roam the hills at leisure. The tactics Alexander used in the Sogdian campaign of 338/7 seem less unique and "new" when one looks closely at his first few years as king.

Similar patterns emerge in Alexander's use of terror and violence. After deploying terror against Kleitos and his forces in Illyria, Alexander moved on to terrorize the Greek polis of Thebes. In order to send a clear message that resistance would not be tolerated by the Greek cities, Alexander used the time-honored Macedonian policy of terror.[68] The Macedonians had been using terror against Greek poleis for years. In 410, for example, King Archelaos destroyed the Greek city of Pydna and deported the population because the Pydnaians were selling timber and otherwise defying Archelaos' rule (Thuc. 7.9.1; Diod. Sic. 13.49.1–2. Cf. Xen. *Hell.* 1.1.12).[69] M. Mari argues that, "the need to attack Pydna suggests that in Macedonia the relationships between the central power and some of the lowland cities had become more difficult, perhaps because the urban centres were trying to claim more autonomy."[70] A definitive message had to be sent to all of his subjects that Archeloas was king, timber was a royal monopoly, and the Greek cities were not in control of their own affairs.[71] In 348, Philip used similar tactics against the Greek city of Olynthos to punish the Olynthians for organizing a regional resistance against him. After a protracted siege of the city, Philip took the town and then allowed his soldiers to loot and raze Olynthos. All of the inhabitants—including the local Athenian garrison—Philip sold into slavery (Diod. Sic. 16.53.2–3; Dem. 9.26).[72] If Demosthenes 9 is any indication, the message was clearly received by Olynthos' neighbors; Philip

66 At the Persian Gates Alexander engages in many of subterfuge, circumvallation and misdirection. See Zahrnt (1999) for a discussion of the potential literary problems with the surviving accounts.

67 Bosworth (1988) 50–1, 89, 112–3, 119–25; Howe (2009).

68 See Brice, chapter one and Millender chapter five in this volume. See Stohl and Lopez (1984a) 3; Stohl (2007); Jackson, Murphy, and Poynting (2010) 2–3; Schmid (2011) 9, 68–9. I am grateful to Ellen Millender for these references and the suggestion that theories of state terror could illuminate Alexander's actions and policies.

69 Borza (1987); (1990) 162–72.

70 Mari (2011) 91.

71 Borza (1987).

72 Hammond and Griffith (1979) 324–8.

had no further trouble in the area, even from Athens, much to Demosthenes' disappointment and frustration.

It is in this Macedonian policy context that we must view Alexander's acts of terror in Sogdiana in 327 and at Thebes in 335.[73] After a lightening march, Alexander met the Thebans before the walls of their own city. Here, once he had destroyed their army in battle and allowed his soldiers to loot, Alexander enslaved the 30,000 survivors and razed the city to the ground, leaving only the house of Pindar standing (Arr. 1.8.5–6; Diod. Sic. 17.13.5; Just. 11.3.8). Thebes seems to be the venue of Alexander's first large-scale attempt at terrorism and it was singularly successful: Alexander's actions at Thebes sent a clear message and quelled any resistance in Greece for the next 10 years.[74]

At this stage, some conclusions about the nature of Alexander's policy during his reign and the nature of the resistance to that policy, are possible: 1) Alexander came East to conquer the Persian Empire and this goal never changed;[75] 2) Alexander was doing nothing new in the Eastern Persian Empire, but rather using time-honored Macedonian tactics of civic foundation, marriage alliance, and terror to protect resources and communication routes; 3) Alexander cared more for agricultural lowlands, fortresses and cities than he did for remote, highland locations—he turned away and let enemies retreat to their hills;[76] and 4) the inhabitants of the Persian Empire (Bactrians and Sogdians included) did not raise an insurgency against an accepted and recognized ruler, rather they resisted a foreign conqueror.

Satibarzanes' Insurgency

Once Bessus put on the upright tiara as Artaxerxes V, he began negotiating with Satibarzanes, Darius III's and now Alexander's, satrap (governor) for the province of Areia.[77] After the death of Darius, Satibarzanes and others had submitted to Alexander and were pardoned (Arr. 3.25.1; cf. Curt. 6.5.32; Diod. Sic. 17.77.3), and in return for his surrender, Satibarzanes was allowed to return

73 See discussion, below.

74 Bosworth (1988) 33, 196. See Worthington (2003) for further analysis of Alexander's actions at Thebes. See Howe (2013b) for the ways in which Athens resisted Alexander's rule with means other than direct action. The Revolt of Agis III was something rather different, since Sparta had never sworn allegiance to Alexander. See Bosworth (1988) 198–204.

75 So argues Bloedow (1999) 76–7 in his highly critical review of Holt (1993).

76 In Illyria, Pisidia, and the Zagros Mountains, for example, Alexander used violence to make a point and ensure that communication routes would be unmolested. He chose not to engage in fruitless pacification exercises in the mountains and allowed the locals to hold them, so long as they remained there and did not hinder his passage or supply lines.

77 See Briant (2002) 745–6, for Satibarzanes' relationship with Bessus.

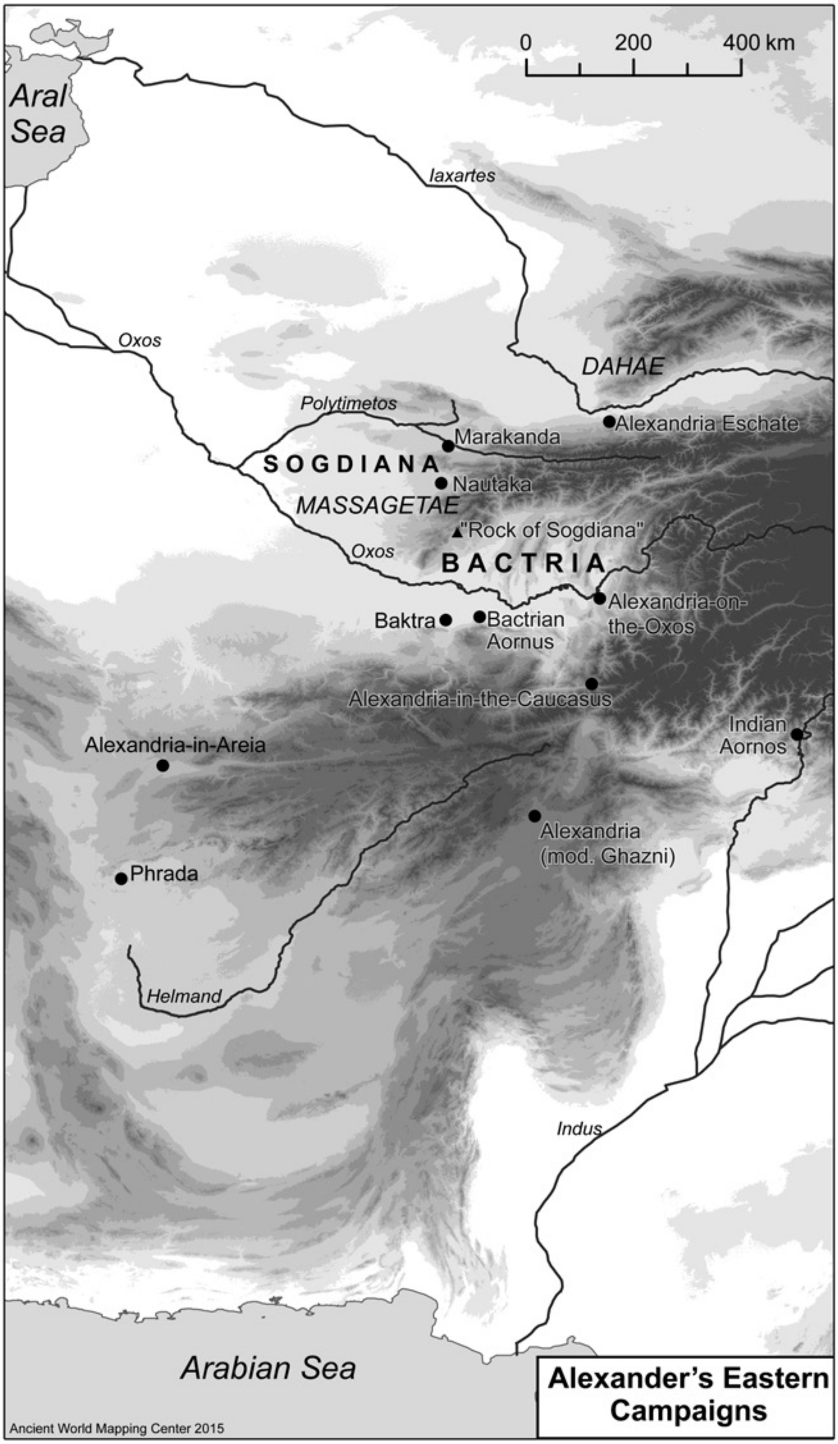


FIGURE 6.1 *Important sites during Alexander of Macedon's Eastern campaigns in 329–325 BCE.*

to his satrapy of Areia, though he was accompanied by a Macedonian commander, Anaxippos and 40 mounted javelin-men to ensure his good behavior (Diod. Sic. 17.78.2; Curt. 6.6.22–3). As soon as he was away from Alexander's immediate supervision, however, Satibarzanes killed his escort and organized an insurgency against his sworn sovereign, Alexander. At this point it is uncertain whether Satibarzanes intended to join with Bessus or strike out on his own (Diod. Sic. 17.78.3; Curt. 6.6.20–34).[78] Regardless of motive, we can appropriately call Satibarzanes' movements against Alexander "insurgency" because he mounted an organized rebellion against a king he not only had recognized, but had even helped to rule the province of Areia.

Alexander responded to this rebellion by hitting Satibarzanes close to Artakoana, near modern Herat, along what is still the main route through the region, and while Alexander and his army were able to inflict casualties, Satibarzanes escaped with much of his force intact. At this point, Alexander chose not to pursue. As he had done in Illyria in the first year of his reign, Alexander broke off pursuit of a fleeing enemy: once Satibarzanes had reached the mountains of Areia Alexander's forces no longer had any advantage, and Alexander's supply and communication lines were no longer in any immediate danger, so the king broke off the pursuit. This consistency in Alexander's actions is worthy of comment. Even though Alexander was fighting against an organized insurgency in Areia, his response did not differ from how he typically dealt with resistance elsewhere: Alexander gave chase, broke off when the enemy had reached difficult terrain, and then left a small force to protect supplies and communications from further molestation. Alexander, then, seems not to have adopted any special counterinsurgency tactics for "Afghanistan" as Lonsdale and Balasevicius argue.[79] Indeed, Alexander seems to have cared little for the "insurgents" at all, once they were no longer an immediate threat to his supplies and communications.

Continuing to follow past policy (such as in Thrace with Alexandroupolis), Alexander planted an Alexandria (Alexandria-in-Areia, modern Khandahar) in order to protect his communication lines and garrison the now leaderless province of Areia.[80] And as he had done in Thrace, Illyria, Karia, Pisidia, and in the Zagros Mountains, Alexander left behind a small force of soldiers to supervise the locals and garrison the new "city" (Arr. 3.25.5).

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78 Arrian (3.25.7) places Satibarzanes' revolt somewhat later, though as Bosworth (1980a) 357 notes, this chronology not convincing. Cf. Atkinson (1994) 205–9.

79 Lonsdale (2007); Balasevicius (2012); Naiden (2013).

80 See Bosworth (1980) 356–7 for the placement of Alexandria-in-Areia.

From Alexandria-in-Areia the king moved on to Phrada, where the infamous "Philotas Affair" occurred.[81] After dealing with this conspiracy in his own ranks, Alexander continued pursing Bessus/Artaxerxes V into the lands of the Ariaspians, and as he moved, the Macedonian king continued his practice of planting cities along supply and communications lines, leaving locals and mercenaries to garrison them, and using as few of his soldiers as possible in the process:[82] Alexandria (modern Ghazni), and Alexandria-in-the-Caucasus (near modern Begram and Charikar) to this day remain strategic centers along the main communication routes of the Helmand River Valley.[83]

Perhaps in an attempt to keep disruption at a minimum, and not increase Bessus' forces, perhaps simply for the sake of convenience, Alexander allowed Darius' appointee Proexes, an ethnic Persian, to remain as satrap (civilian governor) of the province. This was not an attempt to win "hearts and minds" among the local population as Anson argues,[84] but rather an effort to gain needed manpower and use as much of Darius' administrative staff as remained in the area. As Briant notes, governors had no real links to the "common" people in the provinces and would be extremely unlikely to generate any sympathy or common identity outside of the ruling elite.[85] To keep Proexes honest, however, as he had done with Satibarzanes, Alexander left a Macedonian, Neiloxenos son of Satyros, as regional military commander (Arr. 3.38.4).

At this point, Satibarzanes attacked with new forces—2,000 horsemen sent from Bessus (Diod. Sic. 17.78.2; Curt. 6.6.22–3)—hitting Alexander's garrisons, attempting to disrupt his communications, and coordinating with Alexander's rival to Darius' throne. Now, Alexander had to act and now Alexander could act: Satibarzanes was in territory in which he did not have an advantage—his new cavalry would be useless in the mountains. So long as he remained in the valleys, attacking the newly-established Alexandrias, Satibarnazes was vulnerable. Consequently, Alexander dispatched the Persian Artabazos, brother of Darius, with the Macedonians Karanos and Erigyios, to end Satibarzanes' insurgency (Arr. 3.28.2; Curt. 7.3.2–3; Diod. Sic. 17.81.3). Again, the choice of Artabazos was less about local loyalties than about the nature of Alexander's

81 See Heckel (1977) and Adams (2003) for a discussion of the Philotas trial and aftermath.

82 Holt (2005) 31–9 suggests that Alexander was single-mindedly in pursuit of Bessus and gave little thought for the administration of the region. Cf. Nawotka (2010) 268–72.

83 For Alexander's route and the placement of these cities see Bosworth (1980a) 367–70.

84 Anson (2015a).

85 Briant (2002) 324–39.

army at the time. As Bosworth notes, Alexander's army now contained a number of Persian soldiers.[86]

That Alexander now took Satibarzanes' insurgency seriously (as a threat to his rule rather than background resistance, such as he had encountered in the Zagros Mountains), and wanted to make an example of Satibarzanes that would discourage imitation is clear in the king's choice of commanders, Erigyios and Artabazos. Erigyios was Alexander's trusted friend, a childhood companion who trained with Aristotle at Mieza. Artabazos was the grandson of Artaxerxes II, who had spent time in Macedonia as an exile during Alexander's youth during Artaxerxes III Ochos' usurpation, and father of Barsine, current consort of Alexander and mother to his son Herakles.[87] Erygios killed Satibarzanes in hand-to-hand combat, much as Ptolemy would do later when faced with an enemy leader in India.[88] With Satibarzanes' symbolic death the insurgency in Areia came to an end and it did not resurface. This fact alone suggests that the movement in Areia had no ideological connections with Bessus or Spitamenes and the wars in Bactria and Sogdiana.

Bactria and Bessus

As Alexander crossed the Hindu Kush, and Bessus fled before him, the Macedonian king continued his policy of placing garrisons, first at Bactrian Aornus, at then at Baktra (commonly located at modern Balkh), the provincial capital (Arr. 2.29.1; Curt. 7.3.18). This was made easy because Bessus and the Bactrian nobility abandoned the satrapy, continuing east and destroying what supplies they could not carry as they crossed the Oxos River to the neighboring satrapy of Sogdiana. Thus, Alexander was able to occupy Bactria. It is important to note here, though, that the Bactrian nobility had not surrendered to the king; they had fled with Bessus and were still fighting what they saw as a foreign conqueror, a usurper who had now occupied their lands. To put it another way: Alexander had claimed Bactrian lands but the Bactrian leaders had not recognized his claims. Thus, Bessus and his Bactrian and Sogdian allies were not rebels, nor insurgents. As for the local inhabitants, especially the non-elites, it is far from clear in the sources what role (if any) they may have played in either Bessus' resistance or Alexander's conquest. According to

86 Bosworth (1980b). See Olbrycht (2007) for a recent assessment of Alexander's integration of easterners into his army and administration.

87 See Heckel (2006) 119 and 55, respectively, for Erygios and Artabazos.

88 Howe (2009).

Rachel Mairs in her recent study of Bactria, continuity of life for both elites and non-elites, what she calls "business as usual," characterized both Macedonian and Archaemenid policy in the region; the scholarly stress on disruption is not represented in the archaeological evidence.[89] According to Mairs, the non-elites (and even many elites) supported whoever happened to be in control and as a result saw very little disruption in their livelihoods and traditional agricultural rhythms.[90]

Once Bessus crossed the Oxos and arrived in the province of Sogdiana his Bactrians (7,000–8,000 men) abandoned him and returned to Bactria, now largely empty of Alexander's occupying forces because the Macedonian had followed Bessus across the Oxus. We should be clear that there is no evidence for a general Bactrian surrender to Alexander, though this is often assumed. The Bactrian elites seem content to continue in resisting the Macedonian invasion, though as individuals rather than subjects united under Bessus' sovereignty.

Thus, bereft of his Bactrian allies, Bessus turned to the Sogdian nobles in whose lands he now moved, men such as Spitamenes, Dataphernes and Katanes. Unfortunately, this did not end well for him. Once the Bactrians had departed, Spitamenes and the other Sogdian leaders were able to seize Bessus, intending, so the sources report, to hand him over to Alexander (Arr. 3.29–30.5; Curt. 7.5.36–42; Diod Sic.17.5.36–42; 17.83.9; Metz Epit. 5–6). Whatever advantage they hoped to gain, even the ancient sources refuse to speculate. It is clear that the Sogdian leaders had no real plan other than to remove Bessus. In his evaluation of the event, Vacante concluded that we should see Bessus' arrest as the beginning of Spitamenes' insurgency.[91] Green, following Wilcken goes a step further and names Bessus' handover the start of a "nationalist movement," whereby the Sogdians proclaim their sovereign independence. The application of such terminology, however, warrants further scrutiny.[92]

Spitamenes and the other Sogdian leaders had never submitted to Alexander or recognized his authority; they also seem never to have claimed the Persian throne nor issued any proclamations of independence or sovereignty. Indeed, the ancient authors are in agreement that Spitamenes and the other Sogdians had little in common with each other and were unable to reach any consensus

89 Mairs (2014) 30–3, 43–6.

90 The main archaeological surveys of Bactria show no change in settlement patterns, irrigation infrastructure, or agricultural practice. Moreover, there is no real evidence for the extensive destruction often associated (e.g. Holt 2005) with Alexander's campaigns in the region. See Gentelle (1989); Lyonnet (1987); Gardin (1998) for further discussion.

91 Vacante (2012) 87–8.

92 Green (1970) 187; Wilcken (1931) 144–5.

whatsoever; hence the bumbling of Bessus' arrest and handover (Curt. 7.5.36–42; Arr. 3.29–30.5). Thus far, the Sogdians had only managed to cooperate long enough to capture Bessus and then, when Alexander's forces drew near they bolted, each to his own stronghold, and refused to remain and discuss terms of surrender (Arr. 3.29.2–30.4; Curt. 7.5.13–28, 7.5.36–43; Diod. Sic. 17.83.7–9; Plut. *Alex*. 43.6; Just. 12.5; *It. Alex*. 76–78; *Metz Epit*. 5–6).

It seems that Spitamenes and his fellow satraps chose to continue to resist Alexander, perhaps each with a view to replacing Bessus himself—though they were never able to realize this. Like the Bactrians who abandoned Bessus after he crossed the Oxos, the Sogdians who abandoned Bessus to Ptolemy seemed unwilling to submit to Alexander or recognize his claim to the Persian throne. Consequently, even with their Great King Artaxerxes V in Alexander's hands, the Bactrian and Sogdian aristocracy continued to fight the foreign usurper. What they hoped to achieve, if they managed to drive out Alexander is, because of the nature of the sources, beyond recovery. For example, there is not enough ancient testimonia to argue, as Wilcken and Green do, that the Sogdians are attempting to create their own independent kingdom,[93] what Holt, refers to as "a powerful sense of localism so natural in places like Afghanistan."[94] Rachel Mairs' observation that the personal motivations of the Bactrians and Sogdians are far from uniform is most pertinent here.[95]

In the end, if we work from the surviving literary, documentary and archaeological sources, at best we can say that Spitamenes and the other elites were loyalists to the old regime, at worst they were distrustful bumblers, each seeking (unsuccessfully as it turned out) to replace Bessus as leader of the Persian resistance. An independent Sogdiana (and Bactria), while an interesting concept, has no grounding in the evidence and certainly should not be assumed as "so natural in places like Afghanistan."

Sogdiana and Skythia

According to Curtius, at the same time as the Sogdians were taking hold of Bessus, Alexander perpetrated another famous act of terror. As Waldemar Heckel put it, Alexander selected the town of the Branchidai as a place to "set his troops free to satisfy their urges and blood lust."[96] This famous massacre of the Branchidai, supposed descendants of the priests of Apollo who

93 Wilcken (1931) 144; Green (1970) 187.

94 Holt (2005) 51. Cf. Briant (2002) 748–9.

95 Mairs (2014) 43–4.

96 Heckel (2008) 95.

had surrendered to Xerxes back in the early fifth century, has long troubled scholars. The possible identity of these unfortunates has been well studied and should not distract us here.[97] Instead, it is best to review Bosworth's apt conclusion:

> Whether or not the victims actually were the descendants of the Brachidae is immaterial. The allegation may have been made by Alexander' own staff and used to justify an act of savagery which his troops clearly relished, exacerbated as they were by the desert march and the painful crossing of the Oxus.[98]

Whatever the impetus for the Branchidai massacre, destroying a town and allowing his soldiers to savage its population sent a clear message to the Sogdian resistance—Alexander was a terrible enemy and non-combatants were not safe. It seems likely that Alexander was attempting to send a message to the Sogdian and Bactrian elites in much the same way as he sent a message to the Greeks by destroying Thebes. This time, however, terror did not achieve the desired results, perhaps because of the disconnect between the Sogdian elites and the common people, perhaps because the elites themselves were in disarray and leaderless.

In any event, after the massacre of the Branchidai, Alexander took the Sogdian capital, Marakanda (Samarkand) and waited for terror to do its work while he recovered from a leg wound received in recent fighting (Curt. 7.6.1; Arr. 3.10.10). When he was again mobile, and the Sogdians had still not responded to his calls for surrender, Alexander left them to their strongholds (as he had done with Kleitos the Illyrian years earlier) and continued the campaign, seeking the north-eastern edge of the Persian Empire.[99] On the south bank of the Iaxartes (Syr-darya) River, Alexander placed a city called Alexandria Eschate (Alexandria the Farthest), near modern Khojend, to mark the boundary of his conquests.[100] At this point he received word that Spitamenes and Dataphernes were ravaging his garrisons in Bactria and Sogdiana (Arr. 4.1.5; Curt. 7.6.13–15).[101]

97 E.g. Parke (1985).

98 Bosworth (1988) 108–9.

99 Nawotka (2010) 274–5.

100 See Yardley and Heckel (1997) 219–20 for a discussion of location.

101 Here, in Arrian 4.1.5, we see the first use of ἀφίσταμαι (the middle of ἀφίστημι) and the derivative noun, ἀποστάσις, which some might translate as "encourage to revolt." But in this and other instances (e.g. Arrian 6.16.5, 6.17.2 where Alexander dispatches the Brahmin philosophers who resist him) Arrian seems to mean "taking a stand against," or even simply "withdraw." This becomes clear when we compare Arrian's usage with others from his literary model, Xenphon (e.g., Xen. *Cyr.* 4.5.24; 5.5.7; Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.3, 2.5.7; Xen.

In response, he again turned to terror, attacking the forts along the river that had refused to submit as he had crossed earlier. The fighting was so fierce that both Alexander and his second-in-command Krateros were wounded. Although the river forts gave Alexander a great deal of trouble, he eventually prevailed. In punishment and to send a message, the Macedonians killed the men and sold the women and children into slavery (Arr. 4.2.4).

When he recovered from his wounds, Alexander moved to cut the links between the Sogdians and their Skythian allies, sending a force of 1,400 Macedonian and allied cavalry and 1,500 Greek infantry commanded by the Persian Pharnouches, and settling a large number of his mercenaries at Alexandria Eschate (Arr. 4.2–3; Curt. 7.6.16–24; Plut. *Alex*. 45.5; *It. Alex*. 82–83; *Metz Epit*. 9).[102] While the settlement at Alexandria Eschate did deter some Skythians from joining the Sogdians, two of the most warlike Skythian groups, the Massagetai and the Dahai, crossed the Iaxartes and joined Spitamenes to attack Sogdiana's capital, Marakanda. Along the way to Marakanda, the combined forces of Sogdians and Skythians ambushed another relief force of Macedonians under Andromachos, Karanos and Menedemos at the Polytimetos River (Arr. 4.5.2–6; Curt. 7.7.30–39; *It. Alex*. 86–88; *Metz Epit*. 13–14). News of the Polytimetos massacre convinced Alexander to retreat across the Oxos to Baktra for the winter of 329/8.

While holed up in Baktra, Alexander ordered the regional leaders to a peace conference. They refused and from safe bases in Massagetai territory and elsewhere, raided Bactria, ambushing Attinas and his force of 3,000 and even hitting Baktra while Alexander was away, capturing Peithon son of Sosikles, leader of the Royal Pages (Arr. 4.16.1, 4–7; Curt. 7.10.13; 8.1.3–5; *It. Alex*. 98). Alexander's response was decisive and swift. All of the Bactrian fortresses he could reach easily from Baktra "were stormed, the defenders massacred in a calculated campaign of terror."[103] The end of 329 saw the western part of Bactria reduced to a human wasteland and Alexander holed up for the winter in Baktra.

In spring of 328 the campaign took up where it had left off, with Alexander now targeting the fortresses of Sogdiana, starting with the most formidable,

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Hell. 1.1.19). In these cases, neither Arrian nor Xenophon deploys ἀφίσταμαι with ἀπο as do Thucydides and Herodotus (e.g., Thuc 1.81, Hdt. 3.128), where context shows clearly that revolts *from* a recognized governing authority is intended. Indeed, the LSJ (s.v. ἀφίστημι) suggests that this prepositional phrase starting with ἀπο is the distinguishing factor for determining when ἀφίσταμαι means revolt (from) or resist/withdraw. See Howe (2015a) for further discussion of Arrian's literary style and emulation of Xenophon.

102 Bosworth (1995) 19–25.

103 Bosworth (1988) 112.

the impregnable "Rock of Sogdiana," held by Ariamazes. As in 329, Alexander deployed terror in an effort to force the Persian resistance to surrender. Although the literary sources suggest that Alexander was willing to receive Ariamazes' surrender, Vacante has convincingly argued that Alexander had always intended a massacre, thus using "The Rock" to send Spitamenes and the other Sogdian leaders a clear message—surrender or die; nothing can protect you.[104] In the end, Ariamnes and his close associates were flogged and crucified. The others on the Rock, men, women and children, were sold into slavery (Strabo 11.11.4; Curt. 7.10.13–15, 7.11; Polyaen. *Strat.* 4.3.29; *It. Alex.* 97; *Metz Epit.* 15–18).

After "The Rock," Alexander proceeded to the capital, Marakanda, and waited for his recent example of terror to bring results. Unfortunately, the violence in Bactria and at the Sogdian Rock did not seem to have any noticeable effect on the Bactrians, Sogdians or their Skythian allies. Perhaps this lack of results might explain Alexander's flashes of temper—it is here at Marakanda in 328, while pondering how to defeat the Sogdians, that Alexander killed his friend and Companion Kleitos in a drunken rage.[105] Perhaps this policy context also explains the rationale for Alexander's experimentation with *proskynesis*.[106] Certainly, we see Alexander under stress and grasping at any policy that might yield results. At this time he also abandons terror in favor of reconciliation with the Sogdians.

We should not see this change in strategy as a new development, however. The Macedonians had used terror and clemency in tandem at least since Archelaos' sack of Pynda, were the King destroyed the Pyndaians' homes but gave them new ones near Dion and a place in the Macedonian army.[107] Later, when his Greek cities defied him, Philip destroyed Olynthos but rewarded Amphipolis—the city elite were enrolled into the Companion Cavalry—and Alexander himself terrorized Thebes but pardoned Athens.

After the murder of Kleitos, Alexander took the field and put the fortress of Nautaka under siege. During this short campaign, Alexander captured Sisimithres and his "impregnable" citadel, but instead of massacring or enslaving the inhabitants, Alexander pardoned them and reinstated Sisimithres as their ruler. Alexander even returned Nautaka to Sisimithres (Curt 8.19–33;

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104 Vacante (2012).

105 See Carney (1981); Bosworth (1995) 45–7, 51–68; Tritle (2003) for further discussion.

106 See Bowden (2013) for a reassessment of the context and meaning of *proskynesis* and its role in Alexander's pro-Persian policy.

107 Lane Fox (2011a).

Metz Epit. 19; Plut. *Alex*. 58.2; Arr. 4.21.4–5).[108] This act of respect seems to have done what the previous year's acts of terrorism could not: within weeks the Skythians sent Spitamenes' head to Alexander (Arr. 4.17.4–7), and a Sogdian noble, Oxyartes, offered to surrender both his lands and his daughter (Arr. 4.19.5; Curt. 8.4.21–30; *Metz Epit*. 28–31; Plut. *Alex*. 47.7–8). In spring of 327, the marriage between Alexander and Oxyartes' daughter Rhoxanne signaled the Sogdian acceptance of Alexander's right to the Persian throne. The resistance in Bactria and Sogdiana was over.

After marrying Rhoxanne and leaving Oxyartes to deal with any residual resistance, Alexander crossed the mountains into the Indus Valley. Once there, he continued his policy of conquest, making deals with those who submitted and fighting those who did not. Those who resisted, such as the Assaceni (Arr. 4.23),[109] Porus (Plut. *Alex*. 60; Curt. 8.13.13–19, 8.14.14–18; Arr. 5.14.3–6) and the Malli (Arr. 6.5.6),[110] received the full range of Macedonian response, from battle to terror. Alexander also continued to garrison strategic routes, station soldiers, and engage local traditions. The "Afghan Campaign" seems not to have changed Alexander's policy or even to have taught him any new tricks. The Macedonian conquest of the Indus Valley resembles the rest of the campaign, with the only serious trouble caused by Alexander's own army.[111]

Conclusions

Alexander conquered the Persian Empire. He did not inherit it or receive it as a gift from Darius III. We all know this, our literary sources clearly report this, and yet we still overlook the fact that Alexander was an outsider to Asia who had no legitimate claim on Darius' throne. Peter Green's Alexander, for example, was a legitimate king facing fanatical insurgents "with strong religious overtones" who defied his rule.[112] Edward Anson's Alexander was a civilizer who brought peace and prosperity to a long troubled region by winning "hearts and minds."[113] Indeed, scholars from David George Hogarth in the late 1800s to Frank Holt in the early 2000s have tended to see Alexander much as

108 See Bosworth (1995) 134–9 for a reconciliation of the different chronologies offered by Arrian and the vulgate sources. See Harmatta (1999) 133–5 for a discussion of the location and Persian etymology of Nautaka.

109 Howe (2009).

110 Bosworth (1996) 136–49.

111 Anson (2015b).

112 Green (1970) 187.

113 Anson (2015a) 100–2.

Diodorus Siculus did, as a gods-appointed ruler bringing order to at the tip of his spear: "[Alexander] personally sailed with sixty fighting ships, where he flung his spear from the ship and stuck it in the ground and then leapt ashore himself the first of the Macedonians, signifying that he received Asia from the gods as spear-won land" (Diod. Sic. 17.17.2). Eugene Borza famously identified this as seeing "one's own personal Alexander," and called for a more contextual, less character-driven approach.[114] This study has attempted to answer Borza's call by both placing Alexander's "Afghan Campaign" in a Macedonian setting and parsing out the appropriateness of terms such as terrorism, insurgency, resistance and rebellion to ancient realities.

The result is that Alexander's war in Bactria and Sogdiana seems little different from his other wars. In fact, Alexander's wars seem little different from other Macedonian wars—only in terms of scale do Alexander's acts stand out from those of his Argead forebears. For generations the Macedonian kings (Alexander included) had founded cities, married locals, perpetrated acts of terror, and used clemency to turn enemies into allies. They even fought insurgencies—Pydna, Olynthos, Thebes and Satibarzanes' Areia come to mind.

This intentional application of terrorism and insurgency to the world of Alexander the Great has yielded some productive results: 1) Alexander was not the rightful king of Persia simply because he proclaimed himself to be; 2) the Bactrians and Sogdians were not insurgents and rebels simply because historians with foreknowledge about Alexander's success and legacy proclaim them to be; and 3) terrorism and insurgency were not new to the Macedonians.

In the end, it is clear that Alexander's conquest of the Eastern Persian satrapies was a connected and integral part of his overall war to conquer Persia. The so-called Afghan campaign was not a special interlude, a micro-war war against a native insurgency. The Bactrians and Sogdians were fighting a war of resistance against a foreign invader just like their counterparts in Anatolia, Media, and India. Even after their king Artaxerxes V had been tortured and executed many Bactrian and Sogdian nobles continued to resist, just as their counterparts in India would do. The most powerful of these Sogdian nobles, Spitamenes, almost succeeded in replacing Bessus—he probably would have done so if Alexander had not made the timely marriage alliance with Oxyartes which prompted Spitamenes' Scythian allies to separate him from his head. This close reading of the evidence shows that Alexander sought to conquer the Persian Empire and used everything at his disposal to do so. The scale of his conquest (all of Persia), rather than his strategies (there were no innovations to the Argead toolset), have caused Alexander to stand out as the greatest of the Argead kings.

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114 Borza (1967) xi.

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CHAPTER 7

Insurgency in Ptolemaic Egypt

Paul Johstono

Introduction

In 206 BCE, armed dissidents attacked a massive temple complex at Edfu in Upper Egypt.[1] The temple, beneficiary of considerable patronage from the Macedonian kings of Egypt, the Ptolemies, was under construction and nearing completion. The rebel attacks on the complex forced its abandonment, and rebels occupied it as a fortified refuge. The brazen attack on the temple helped bring a growing rebellion to the attention of the Ptolemaic state.[2] The insurrection lasted another twenty years, covering the end of Ptolemy IV's reign and much of Ptolemy V's. During that time much of Upper Egypt and the Nile Delta lay outside effective Ptolemaic authority. Egyptian pharaohs ruled from Thebes, multiple military campaigns into rebel territory were forced to withdraw, and whole villages and even a few cities were burned to the ground, their populations enslaved or massacred. Only in 186 were the Ptolemies able to pacify the rebellion and restore their authority over the whole of Egypt. Supporters of Ptolemaic rule and Hellenistic culture termed the insurrection ταραχὴ, "disturbance," and most classicists and ancient historians have followed suit, or else called it "The Great Revolt."[3] In fact the rebel violence of those decades exhibited qualities typical of insurgencies. Analyzing Egyptian violent resistance in terms of insurgency clarifies rebel violence, underscores the seriousness of the

1 See De Wit (1961) for the inscription that provides these details. Apollonopolis Magna/Edfu was also the site of a rather small military colony and frequent military traffic associated with elephant hunts and Red Sea trading. Unless otherwise stated, all dates are BCE.

2 *P.Kroll.* 16 = *P.Köln.* 7.313, a copy of royal decrees from 186, and *P.Grenf.* 1.11, a bureaucratic dossier from 181, both date the start of the rebellion to the sixteenth year of Ptolemy IV. Skeat (1973) demonstrated that the state officially reckoned year 16 as the start of the revolt. All papyri referenced here can be viewed on the Papyrological Navigator, found at www.papyri.info.

3 On the revolt, and for the use of these terms, see: Veïsse (2004); Clarysse (1978); (2003); McGing (1997); Pestman (1995); Préaux (1978) 522–52; Peremans (1978); Dunand (1983); Vandorpe (1986); Anagnostou-Canas (1992); Noshy (1992); Török (1997); and in recent monographs on the Ptolemaic kingdom and army, Hölbl (2001) 153–9 and 307; Manning (2003) 164–71; Fischer-Bovet (2014) 92–8.

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movement, and helps establish the historical significance of the eventual, successful Ptolemaic response.

The Egyptian revolt has figured in the historiography of the Hellenistic age as an *exemplum* of Ptolemaic decline. The Ptolemies' inability to resolve internal disturbances has signified their relative weakness in the Mediterranean world since the second century. The principle historian of the Hellenistic Age, Polybius, twice mentioned the Ptolemaic war against the Egyptians, calling it a war of μικρῶν πραγμάτων "small events" (14.12.5), which involved ὃς χωρὶς τῆς εἰς ἀλλήλους ὠμότητος καὶ παρανομίας οὔτε παράταξιν οὔτε ναυμαχίαν οὔτε πολιορκίαν οὔθ' ἕτερον οὐδὲν ἔσχε μνήμης ἄξιον ("nothing worthy of note—neither pitched battle nor naval engagement nor siege—other than each side's savagery and lawlessness" 14.12.4). Polybius, ever interested in causation, tied the war to Ptolemy IV Philopator's use of native Egyptian soldiers in the Fourth Syrian War (219–217). In his view, the Egyptians' experience of victory made them haughty, and they sought out a "leader and public face" to lead an independence movement (Polyb. 5.107.3).[4] This led him to diagnose the revolt as a side effect of extensive, inclusive military mobilization. Enrolling 20,000 Egyptian soldiers helped Ptolemy win the decisive and spectacular battle of Raphia in 217, but bore unintended, long-term, painful consequences (Polyb. 5.107.1).[5] While Polybius professed that the "Egyptian War" was unworthy of discussion, his dismissiveness demonstrates only his inability to understand what was taking place. What Polybius, coming from a Hellenic paradigm of conventional warfare, failed to conceptualize, this chapter seeks to explain in terms of irregular warfare and insurgency.

Scholarly attention to the first ταραχὴ and to the wider phenomenon of Egyptian rebellion in Egypt is relatively abundant. It has, however, generally

4 φρονηματισθέντες γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ περὶ Ῥαφίαν προτερήματος, οὐκέτι τὸ προσταττόμενον οἷοί τ' ἦσαν ὑπομένειν, ἀλλ' ἐζήτουν ἡγεμόνα καὶ πρόσωπον, ὡς ἱκανοὶ βοηθεῖν ὄντες αὑτοῖς ("They came to think highly of themselves from their success at Raphia, and refused to take further orders, but sought out a commander and public face, as capable of caring for themselves"). Brian McGing, in a conference at Yale in the fall of 2014, pointed out the parallels that could be made here with the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. Fischer-Bovet (2014) 92 sees in this the significance of demobilization as a financial catalyst for revolt.

5 εὐθέως ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν καιρῶν συνέβαινε γίνεσθαι τὸν πρὸς τοὺς Αἰγυπτίους πόλεμον. Aside from Peremans (1978) 395, most have seen in the phrase εὐθέως ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν καιρῶν an indication that the Egyptian war began as soon as 216. Supposing a first conflict that was suppressed, but engendered the later war, they ignore the singular expression "the war against the Egyptians," by which Polybius quite clearly means the Great Revolt. Polybius' use of εὐθέως loses some force when paired with ἀπὸ τούτων τῶν καιρῶν when Polybius' subject is Philopator, for whom Polybius had such loathing he treated his reign after Raphia in a single excursus rather than year-by-year (15.29).

avoided the conduct of the war to focus upon the root causes,[6] the onomastics of rebel chieftains,[7] and issues of chronology.[8] Scholars have challenged Polybius' ethno-nationalistic explanation with an argument grounded in socio-economic factors: indications of rampant inflation in the late third century, the favoritism of the system toward aristocrats, administrators, and soldiers, and evidence for a major, punishing re-monetization late in the reign of Ptolemy IV.[9] The economic explanation is not without its own complications. There are numerous coin hoards from Upper Egypt, also called the Thebaid, hidden around the start of the revolt, but were they hidden from re-monetization collections or advancing rebels?[10] More recent scholarship has seen little reason to pit economic against national causes: the rebels were almost entirely Egyptian, but so was the peasant class and, in the areas most affected by violence, the population as a whole. Ethnic and religious antagonism toward the Greeks complemented and enhanced the pangs of economic hardship, since land tenure and taxation systems disproportionately favored Greeks.[11] Despite the growing body of work on the revolt, the nature and purpose of rebel violence have not received substantial attention.[12] The difficulty of distinguishing normal banditry or violence from rebellion has stymied analysis of documentary evidence, and with few exceptions has relegated all treatment of rebel violence to the evidence from Ptolemaic decrees.[13]

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6 See in particular Préaux (1978) 389–98, who pioneered a strongly socioeconomic analysis for the cause of the revolt, in place of anachronistic nationalistic sentiment; see also Peremans (1978); Monson (2012) 251–9 for further support of that position. See Hölbl (2001) 135–40 for religious and ethnic energies married to a primarily socio-economic cause; and McGing (1997) 287–9 for an argument that nationalistic sentiment should not be discounted; Clarysse (2003) 448–58; Fischer-Bovet (2014) 92; and especially Veïsse (2004) xi–xv, 245–48 for recent coverage, which tends to follow Préaux, with some of the moderations offered through Hölbl.

7 Clarysse (1978) 23–53; Pestman (1995a) 101–37; Veïsse (2004) 11–14, 84–98.

8 Vandorpe (1986) 294–302; Pestman (1995b) 99–100; Veïsse (2004) 20–6.

9 See Préaux (1978) in particular; with Turner (1984) 163–64; Vandorpe (1986); Monson (2012) 252. See Anagnostou-Canas (1992) for an interpretation in line with colonial insurrections. On inflation and currency reform, see Clarysse (1978) and Fischer-Bovet (2012) for the relevant literature.

10 Fauscher and Lorber (2010) 36.

11 For which, Bingen (2007) 189–205.

12 Préaux (1936) 529–30 and McGing (1997) 283–4 analyzed the single text *BGU* 6.1215 to investigate the nature of rebel operations. It is the only text generally recognized as describing rebel acts.

13 E.g., Galula (1964) 37 suggested that "objectively, there is no difference" between banditry and early insurgent violence; see Collier (2000) for the transitional, even evolutionary, relationship that can exist between criminal activity and eventual rebellion. On banditry,

Official Ptolemaic sources, like the decree on the famous Rosetta stone, carry their own set of complications, but provide greater insight than Polybius into the identities and activities of the rebels. These works are always styled to achieve political ends, craft and affirm official narratives, and convey the perspective of the state. For example, beginning soon after 200 the Ptolemaic bureaucracy began referring to the rebellion as ταραχὴ, and the word has stuck in the historiography ever since.[14] But ταραχὴ is a highly political term. It evoked the disturbed water in a stirred pot, and its selection is not unlike the Victorian moniker "Troubles" applied to violence in Northern Ireland. For the regime, the word possessed the advantage of describing an impermanent and fundamentally irrational condition disrupting an otherwise stable system. Polybius used πόλεμος, "war," for the revolt, but it was never used in official sources. It was, however, used in Egypt during the revolt. Before Ptolemaic agents deployed ταραχὴ to assert discursive control of the situation, there was no name for the violent movement afoot in the countryside. Officially, it was not happening, and so of course it bore no official name. But in 203, a group of Greeks in Middle Egypt were drawing up a formulaic agricultural lease on behalf of the orphaned son of a cavalry officer, and added a unique clause that inured the lessees from the usual, savage default penalties in the event their inability to repay resulted from πλὴν πολεμίων κωλύματος, "the devastations of foemen."[15] Those on the ground often see things differently from those in halls of power.

Those in charge in Alexandria preferred not to use legitimizing words like πόλεμος and πολεμίοι. The partisans in ταραχὴ were not enemies but ἀποστάται, "rebels". Political-religious decrees provided even greater opportunities to cast the insurgents in a negative light. The Rosetta decree called the rebels ἀσεβεῖς, "impious" men, τῶν ἀλλότρια φρονησάντων, "plotters of secession," and τῶν ἀποστάντων, "makers of sedition." It accused them of πολλὰ κακὰ συντετελεσμένοι, "committing great evils," against the temples and inhabitants of Egypt (*OGIS* 90 lines 19–27). The description of the rebels as impious attackers of temples was played up even more in a decree at posted at Philae in

see Shaw (1984); Bauschatz (2013); and Brice, chapter one in this volume. Examples from times of relative tranquility in Egypt: *P.Petr*. 3.28, *P.Tebt*. 3.2.920, *SB* 8.9792.

14 Its first attested use was in a royal decree promulgated in November 198 (*P.Sijp*. 45 line 9). It was used again a year later in the Rosetta decree (*OGIS* 90.19–20: ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ταραχὴν καιροῖς, "in the times of the Disturbance."

15 *BGU* 6.1266 lines 17–20. While exception clauses were the norm, they were also formulaic, and this is the only one ever found containing a provision for enemy attacks. The orphan, Leon, was the son of Kallias, a cavalry officer in the Oxyrhynchite region.

186, about a decade later, at the conclusion of the revolt. In it, the rebels, called enemies of the gods, have committed a laundry list of impious, misanthropic, seditious crimes:

> They desecrated the temples and damaged the divine statues. They molested the priests and suppressed the offerings on the altars and in the shrines. They sacked the towns and their population, women and children included, committing every depravity in the time of anarchy. They stole the taxes of the provinces; they damaged the irrigation works.[16]

The list of offenses clarifies the Ptolemaic interpretation of the revolt: the rebels attacked sacred places and population centers, and disrupted the economy by stealing taxes and damaging agricultural infrastructure. The text characterizes the rebels as a threat to Egyptian temples and Egyptian people, undermining religious and nationalistic insurgent propaganda. While the list made convenient Ptolemaic propaganda, it need not be entirely fabricated. In fact it provides a neat jumping-off point for describing the nature of rebel violence and analyzing its correspondence to the conduct of insurgencies.

The term ταραχή, or "disturbance," is of limited utility in analyzing patterns of resistance, as it reflects the attitude of the state toward dissent rather than the purpose, organization, or activity of the dissenters. It has contributed to understating the seriousness of the resistance in the period 207–186. The historiography of the Hellenistic period has tended to interpret the length of the revolt as a sign of Ptolemaic weakness.[17] While it is beyond dispute that the Ptolemaic kingdom entered a period of instability and decline that corresponded with the revolt, the Ptolemies' difficulty suppressing it was neither surprising nor exceptional. The Ptolemaic state faced a formidable insurgency: it enjoyed some popular support, employed irregular warfare tactics, was located in the kingdom's heartland, and was waging a protracted campaign to end Ptolemaic

16 The decree survives only in hieroglyphic. For it, see *Hieroglyphische Urkunden* II, 217–30; Sethe (1917) 35–49; Müller (1920) 59–88, whose translation I have used; as well as more recently Török (1997) 600–7.

17 Ptolemaic decline of some sort is a given, but it is also frequently associated with Egyptian unrest, e.g., in Gruen (1984) 683–4; Walbank (1993) 122; Hölbl (2001) 127, 138–42; Manning (2003) 164, 230–1; Monson (2012) 236, 251–2; Shipley (2000) 230–3; especially Eckstein (2007) 111–12. The general acceptance of at least some part of Huss' apologia (1976) for Ptolemy IV has shifted the cause of Ptolemaic decline from the Polybian portrait of a dissolute monarch down to 200 or later, such that the burden generally rests on the poor response to the revolt and the internal instabilities of the dynasty during the minority of Ptolemy V.

authority in large regions of Egypt. It is far more surprising that the Ptolemaic state survived at all, and moreover, re-united and subdued the whole of Egypt in what amounted to a successful counterinsurgency campaign.

One of the chief dangers in this sort of study is anachronism. Most insurgency theory was developed in a post-colonial, Cold War context, and recently recalibrated to fit the digital age and "War on Terror." Even so, insurgency, absent specific political or religious ideologies or modernist technologies, describes violent movements that have long been common, as this volume demonstrates, in destabilized or repressive states. The popular definition of insurgency as "a revolt or rebellious movement intended to overturn or eliminate a constituted government or authority by subversion and military force" is applicable in any era.[18] Analyzing rebellion in Hellenistic Egypt in terms of insurgency provides an opportunity to uncover popular agency and make sense of otherwise chaotic violence. Insurgent "subversion and military force" may include sabotage and vandalism, indirect violence and intimidation, and protracted and irregular warfare.[19] It is important to note that an insurgency need not be a single, unified movement (that certainly was not the case in Egypt), nor necessarily aim only for complete revolution. Insurgency is a violent attempt to renegotiate power relationships, and historically, many insurgents have been satisfied with rather less than revolution.[20] In Ptolemaic Egypt socio-economic inequalities, expanded royal intrusion, suspicion of Hellenic culture, and corrupt administration seem to have constituted, in varying degrees, both the causes for the ταραχὴ and the chief targets of insurgent violence. Rebellion in Egypt began with everyday forms of resistance, built into subversive violence, and at its height employed military force in attempts to overthrow or secede from Ptolemaic rule.

Waging an Insurgency in Hellenistic Egypt

"It is imperative," wrote the chief financial official of Egypt, "that each person dwelling in the country clearly perceive and believe that all such acts have been brought to an end and they are free from the bad conditions now past," (σαφῶς

18 *FM* 3–24 (2006); see also Brice, chapter one, this volume.

19 Galula simply defined insurgency as a protracted revolution (1964) 2; Kalyvas (2006) 67, where insurgents employing irregular warfare can "win by not losing."

20 See Metz (2012); Scott (1970) 12–27 for more flexible approaches to insurgent objectives. In general, entries in *RHIC* reflect openness toward a multiplicity of insurgent objectives and methods.

γὰρ εἰδέν̣α̣ι δ̣ε̣ῖ ἕκασ̣τ̣ον τῶν ἐν τῆι χώραι κατοικούντ̣ω̣[ν] κ̣αὶ πεπιστευκέναι διότι πᾶν τ̣ὸ̣ [το]ιοῦτον ε[ἰ]ς ἐπίστασ̣ι̣ν ἧκτ̣α̣ι καὶ [τ]ῆς πρότερον κ̣[α]κ̣ε̣ξί̣α̣ς̣ ἀπ̣ο̣λ̣ε̣λυμένοι εἰσίν, *P.Tebt.* 3.1.703, lines 225–30). Writing to his regional subordinates, the official (the διοικητὴς) was explaining how consistent and efficient administration could bring an end to a time of crisis. He was writing, however, at a point roughly contemporaneous with that first noteworthy attack at Edfu. While subsequent events proved his optimism misguided, the memorandum provides evidence for the first acts of rebellion. The insurgency in Egypt emerged, like many modern insurgencies have, from less organized, less violent, and less exceptional forms of resistance. Many small acts accumulated alongside the grievances that bore them before boiling over into organized, armed rebellion.

The text, *P.Tebt.* 3.1.703, is one of the most detailed surviving accounts of government procedures in Ptolemaic Egypt. It concerns the proper management of agricultural and industrial affairs in the area under the regional official's oversight.[21] Although much of it reflects the everyday bureaucracy of Egypt, it is also clear that portions of the text concern three conditions related to the aforementioned crisis. The first two were bureaucratic failings: poor management hurt productivity, and corrupt officials hurt villagers financially and damaged their perception of the regime's legitimacy.[22] The third problem, and a major contributor to the sense of crisis, was a widespread outbreak of ἀναχώρησις, the desertion or abandonment of land.[23] In Egypt, it was the most significant act of non-violent resistance available, and surprisingly commonplace. Normally, peasants committed ἀναχώρησις in response to local abuses, generally by fleeing to temple precincts, and were often able to secure

21 For it, see Rostovtzeff's commentary in the original publication, Hunt and Smyly (1933) 66–102; also Préaux (1936) 524; Polacek (1970) 411–26; Samuel (1971); Crawford (1976); Huss (1980); McGing (1997) 275–6. The text is undated, but Zenod[—]'s tenure could fall between Theogenes and Dorion, from 207–204, or between Eutychos and Chrysippos under Ptolemy III. It is from the same mummy cartonnage as *P.Tebt.* 3.1.705, one of the last documents from Theogenes' tenure as διοικητὴς, and other papyri from the end of Ptolemy IV's reign.

22 Directions for more effective management: lines 29–40, 49–60; Directions for dealing with graft: 40–9, 60–3. And for both, tied into a conclusion that sees effective management and reduced graft as the key to renewed stability, see 222–81. Strikingly, the διοικητὴς also ordered his subordinate to be very zealous in the proper collection of taxes and all due fees, including the high royal tariff on linen (89–117), which was one of the burdens abolished in the Rosetta decree.

23 On ἀναχώρησις, see Schmidt (1966); and Dunand (1980).

some form of concession before returning to their lands and work.[24] In the years before the insurgency began, ἀναχώρησις took an unprecedented form. The διοικητὴς wrote, ἐπιμελὲς δέ σοι ἔστω καὶ ἵνα τὰ κ̣α̣τ̣ὰ̣ τοὺς μαχίμους οἰκο[ν] ομῆται ("Be vigilant in managing the situation with the μάχιμοι," lines 215–16). The μάχιμοι were Egyptian soldiers, and it is clear from the text that they—not peasants—were committing ἀναχώρησις, and rather than seeking out temple precincts in protest they were simply disappearing. The episodes of desertion were not local, but sufficiently widespread to attract attention from the διοικητὴς, whose office earlier issued a memorandum περὶ τ̣ῶν ἀνακεχωρηκ̣ό̣[τ] ων σωμάτων ἐκ τῶν ἔργων καὶ ἀπ̣ .[. .] .ω̣ν ναυτῶν "Concerning persons committing ἀναχώρησις from the works and … [deserted?] sailors" (216–9) in accordance with which any μάχιμοι apprehended were to be detained until they could be sent to Alexandria (220–3).[25] This evidence lends some credence to Polybius' narrative: the Egyptian revolt was not solely or perhaps even chiefly a peasants' revolt. Egyptian soldiers figured prominently from the outset.

That the Egyptian soldiery played a key role in the rebellion is attested as well in the Rosetta Decree, which identified the disaffected population of Egypt as τε τῶν μαχίμων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἀλλότρια φρονησάντων ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ταραχὴν καιροῖς ("the native soldiers and others disposed to secession during the Disturbance," *OGIS* 90.19–20). At the same time, many Egyptian soldiers remained loyal, and many rebels were not soldiers. Two prominent officers at Alexandria dedicated a costly monument to the young Ptolemy V: a straightforward proof of their fealty.[26] A rebel from Middle Egypt, killed in 204/3, was an embalmer.[27] The participation of deserted soldiers may have contributed to some operational successes on the part of the rebels, but did not accelerate the insurgents' transition toward direct action. Instead, the evidence indicates

24 In *P.Stras*. 2.111 farmers sought out a local temple to a pronouncement from a local administrator's agent, in *BGU* 6.1245 a military settler's rentier took refuge in a temple to renegotiate rent, in *P.Cair.Zen*. 2.59230 a high-level administrator worries a labor dispute will lead to ἀναχώρησις, in *P.Cair.Zen*. 2.59245 farmers sought refuge in a local temple after being assigned to farm military settlers' land, and see *P.Heid*. 9.424 for an example of the subsequent negotiation process.

25 Desertion from naval duty was a continual problem, mainly among the rowers, Turner (1984) 158.

26 *OGIS* 731. The dedication is in Greek, but the officers had Egyptian names, an Egyptian father, and were commanders of the περὶ αὐλὴν ἐπιλέκτων μαχίμων, the "Picked Egyptians of the Guard."

27 Psenephmus son of Paos, from Philadelpheia in the Arsinoite province (the El-Fayum), concerning whom see Armoni (2014). Psenephmus was also certainly not some peasant pauper, since he controlled the γέρως ἐνταφιαστικοῦ, "embalming privileges" for Philadelpheia (*P.Tarich*. 6b.15).

that military experience more likely functioned to calibrate the rational calculations behind the selection of targets and methods of attack.[28] The areas of Egypt with the largest Hellenic and military presence were the greatest challenge to insurgents, and their strategy in those contexts relied upon subversive acts and indirect violence. Target and method selection in those regions, and generally in the early stages of the revolt, indicates that rebels sought to maximize value while minimizing risk, and in many cases made fairly accurate calculations. Rebel activity can be divided into three categories along those lines: subversion and subterfuge, indirect violence, and direct action.

Subversion and Subterfuge in the Egyptian Revolt

As an analytical tool, an aspect of insurgency that possesses particular utility is its description of the purpose of violent acts. Insurgent violence, however chaotic it may seem, functions alongside other tools to subvert the perceived legitimacy of the established government, to erode the will and capacity of the established government to fight, and to strengthen the popular legitimacy of the insurgents.[29] Violence against "soft" targets is a core quality of insurgent subversion. In Egypt, the rebels targeted symbols of Ptolemaic authority, and seem to have selected targets with high symbolic or economic value and relatively low risk. The insurgents' favorite targets seem to have been irrigation works, followed by other nodes in the agricultural system: grain silos, threshing floors, and contract offices. We have already seen how Greeks drawing up a farming contract early in the rebellion made provisions for attacks that impacted the harvest (*BGU* 6.1266). A year earlier, in 204, a tax-farming directive from the same province captures a similar, tentative mood. While the text assumes smooth collection, one (now exceedingly fragmentary) provision was added that concerned how "the dispatch of forces" to the province might adversely impact collection (*UPZ* 1.112).[30] Tax collection is difficult in war zones, and royal decrees indicate that it was impeded or impossible across much of Egypt during the revolt.[31]

28 Metz (2007) 16–20.

29 See Galula (1964) 6–9 on the subversive aspects of insurgent violence; Metz (2007) 1–7 for a summary, or 43–9 for his "competitive market" theorization of insurgent dynamics.

30 The key line, recto fr. 6 line 21, falls within a series of exceptions clauses, and all that is left of it reads παραγενομένου ἢ δυνάμεις ἀποστείλαντος. The following line seems to indicate that an official or court would revise the anticipated receipts or their due date in such a circumstance.

31 The Rosetta decree, *OGIS* 90; the Philae decree; and the amnesty decree *P.Köln*. 7.313. In both 196 and 186 the Ptolemies remitted many back taxes due to the state, nulling a popular grievance, and recognizing the reality that uncollected taxes could not then be collected.



FIGURE 7.1 *This map depicts key sites from the insurgency in Ptolemaic Egypt. The location of Lykopolis in the Delta is approximate. The region from Lykonpolis to Syene constituted the Thebaid. Many of the incidents from Middle Egypt took place in the Fayum basin, which extended south and east toward the Nile from Lake Moeris.*

The Ptolemaic description of rebel activities in the Philae decree attested their attacks on dikes and canals, banks, and contract archives.[32] Targeting irrigation works implies a particular type of subversive assault on the regime.[33] The irrigation works in Upper Egypt had been, in many cases, expanded in the previous three or four decades as part of the expansion of the Hellenistic presence there.[34] Irrigation works represented royal authority over the land and over the people, who were conscripted as construction labor for the works.[35] Attacking them directly impacted the Ptolemaic agricultural system, which depended on the irrigation system to manage the flooding of the Nile and to put new land under cultivation. Targeting irrigation systems was thus not only relatively safe, but also had considerable symbolic and real value.

The Philae decree is the only explicit source for attacks on irrigation during the Great Revolt, but other evidence is indicative of such operations and sheds light on how they were conducted. In 195, the governor of the Arsinoite province, the modern El-Fayum, alerted his subordinates to pay special attention to guarding the irrigation works (*P.Tebt.* 3.1.706). A series of papyri from the same region offer evidence indicative rather than conclusive of agricultural sabotage: in September 204, eight broken gates in the canal near the town Lysimachis risked over-flooding, while a sluice in a dike had been broken near Kaminoi, with similar risks for over-flooding if it were not repaired.[36] In any time of unrest in Egypt, irrigation works were common targets. In 245, after a nighttime scuffle at the sluices of a dike, several Greeks accused an Egyptian

32 Müller (1920).

33 See Veïsse (2004) 179–81 for the possible link between rebel destruction of irrigation works and the expansion of un-cultivated and ownerless categories of land in the aftermath of the revolt. This conclusion is derived mainly from *SB* 24.15972, a papyrus from Lykonpolis, for which see McGing (1997) 273–314.

34 See Manning (2010) 36–48 on the Ptolemaic state and the irrigation system in general, his statement on Ptolemaic strategy on p. 92, and on Ptolemaic presence in the Thebaid, p. 104–113. The Royal Canal, which extended southwest from Thebes, was one project associated with the massive gift estate of Agathokles, the favorite of Ptolemy IV (see *BGU* 6.1415 or *O.Wilb.* 2 for Agathokles' estate).

35 For examples, see *UPZ* 2.157.40–66 and *P.Bon.* 11 for major conscript labor projects on canals, dikes, and embankments in the Perithebaid during the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes and Ptolemy IV Philopator.

36 See *Chr.Wilck.* 386, *SB* 12.10845, and 10846. The texts are, as is so often the case with papyri, fragmentary. This complicates interpretation. Maintenance of irrigation works would have been routine, yet the situation in question, with so many, nearly simultaneous failings, is suspicious. Lysimachis, in particular, was the site of several insurgent attacks in later years.

of tampering with the sluicegate (*P.Petr.* 2.23, 7–9). That revolt began because of military mobilization and bad harvests. It ended quickly when the king returned from campaigns in Syria, but a couple of years later, scores of the settlers in Thebes were still being assigned duties to guard the dikes, a duty normally left to Egyptian policemen.[37] In 123, Egyptians from a town in Upper Egypt attacked the irrigation works in the vicinity of the neighboring town; over twelve days, organized vandalism escalated into full-blown battle.[38] In 118, a group of canal-guards were attacked and put to flight; the rebels then broke open a dam and flooded a whole plain, endangering the harvest for several small villages (*PSI* 3.168).

Attacks on crops, property, and administrative archives further served to match symbolic, consequential, and generally low-risk targets for the rebels. These sorts of acts were feasible in regions like the Fayum, where the Greek presence made direct action too risky. Rebels relied on the cover of night, and seem to have relied heavily on arson. The insurgency came, rather quietly, to the settler town Lysimachis in the Fayum during the summer of 198.[39] Two papyri give some indication of the sorts of attacks involved. First, someone (rebels?) burned down a cavalryman's threshing floor one night in June (*P.Petr.* 3.34). The bottom third or so of the report is missing, and the fragment breaks off while describing how other villagers arrived to help extinguish the blaze.[40] Two months later, rebels were the likely culprits behind the burned grain stores of three military settlers (*P.Petr.* 2.38).[41] A property-dispute three decades later hinged upon a man's testimony that rebels had burned a cache of contracts in Soknopaiou Nesos, on the northern edge of the Fayum. The man testified that ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσ[θεν χρόνοις, ἐν δὲ τῆ]ι γενημένηι ταραχῆι "in times past, during the Troubles," the villagers ἐν τῆι πόλει ἠναγκάσθην ὑπὸ τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἀποστατῶν ἐνέγκαι τὰς συνγραφὰς καὶ ταύτας κατακαῦσαι, ("were compelled by the Egyptian rebels to round up the town's contracts and burn

37 *UPZ* 2.157, 241, see lines 21–24. Twelve Egyptians were assigned as canal-guards, but were joined by fifty-three veteran settlers.

38 *Chr.Wilck* 11. At least three separate encounters took place, from the first, which involved the destruction of nine sluices and the flooding of the plain, to the last, which involved a battle between about one thousand men.

39 That is, unless the damage to the canal gates near Lysimachis was a result of insurgent sabotage.

40 Lines 6–7: ἐπιβοηθησάντων δὲ τῶν ἐκ τῆς κώμης δ̣ιέσωισαν ... ("because people from the village came to my aid, some of it was salvaged ...").

41 Later texts (*P.Tebt.* 3.2.1043 lines 45–55, *P.Tebt.* 3.2.888) indicate that rebels again targeted crop stores in Middle Egypt during the revolt in the 160's.

them," *P.Amh.* 2.30, lines 28–36).[42] These instances provide further insights into the patterns of violence. The rebels likely used the cover of night to avoid both confrontation and identification, and the attackers chose economic and agricultural targets related to the agents (military settlers) and institutions (contract archives) of the regime, but short of outright assaults on the soldiers themselves. The attack at Soknopaiou Nesos, which implies the threat of human violence alongside the destruction of property, serves as a fitting transition to the next stage of insurgent attacks: indirect violence against regime collaborators or unaligned civilians.

Indirect Violence in the Egyptian Revolt

The Egyptian rebels were not averse to assaults, and engaged in many, particularly when their targets were relatively vulnerable. Human violence intimidated the civilian population. Every failure of the state to prevent it impugned its legitimacy. The result, evident in a text discussed below, was a shifting alignment among the civilian populace. Civilian alignment is a key measure of an insurgency's success; most of the populace will never bear arms against the state, but offering passive support to insurgents or refusing it to the state "is critical for successful insurgent operations."[43]

The first major attack of the Great Revolt was not against a military installation or an administrative position: it was the attack on the Ptolemaic temple of Apollo-Horus.[44] The temple of Horus was being built at Edfu, deep in Upper Egypt, near one of the main departure points for expeditions to the Red Sea Coast. Even though Edfu (also known as Apollonopolis Magna) was home to soldiers[45] and served as a staging point for military and hunting expeditions,[46] rebel attacks succeeded in shutting down construction.

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42 This document has stymied interpreters at times: the dispute took place shortly after the Sixth Syrian War, during which Antiochus IV campaigned in the Fayum, and about the same time as the revolt of Dionysios Petosorapis. But the key testimony about the burned contracts was delivered by village elders, and concerned the *father* of the man involved in the dispute.

43 Galula (1964) 34; most since have emphasized that "the complicity of the population is not to be confused with [their] sympathy" (37), but may arise from coercion, fear, self-interest, social pressure, or other factors.

44 Veïsse (2004) 14–5; De Wit (1961) 56–97, 277–320.

45 SB 6.9302 (late third century, frequently referred to as *P.Edfou* 8). SB 8.9681 (175) confirms the withdrawal of military settlers from Apollonopolis at the start of the revolt: ἀπ]εχώρ̣ε̣ι̣ ἀ̣πὸ τ̣ῶν τόπων. Soldiers were also stationed or settled at Arsinoe near Apollonopolis, for which see *P.Hal.* 1, lines 166–85.

46 The soldiers and travelers who thanked Pan at El-Kanais, see Bernand (1972), were on the road between Edfu and Berenike on the Red Sea. *Chr.Wilck.* 451 (223) illustrates the roles Arsinoe and Apollonopolis played in providing provisions and pay for the expeditions.

Attacks during the revolt frequently targeted temples, according to the official Ptolemaic versions of events (*OGIS* 90.23).[47] Temples received royal patronage, operated their own banks, often held large deposits of coin and materiel for rebel use, and in the thickly-built Egyptian style, were potential fortresses.[48] The temples became battlegrounds and forts for both sides during the revolt.[49] In addition to the temple of Apollo-Horus, active construction at the temple of Arensnuphis at Philae was abandoned, and the incomplete temple plundered and damaged during the revolt; this was also the case for the Ptolemaic temple of Montu at Medamoud near Thebes.[50] The temple at Abydos was occupied by the rebels and was the site of heavy fighting. In the ταραχὴ temples and priests who remained loyal to the regime became rebel targets, reckoned elite collaborators with the Ptolemaic regime.[51] Priests also took a more active role at times. The priests of Amun at Thebes, and likely several other Upper Egyptian priesthoods, seem to have accommodated or even supported the rebels.[52] At least three oracles disseminated through Egypt in the second century foretold the end of Greek rule in Egypt.[53] In a short-lived

47 ἀσεβέσιν, οἳ ἦσαν εἴς τε τὰ ἱερὰ … πολλὰ κακὰ συντετελεσμένοι, "Godless, they perpetrated many evils … against the temples" and at line 27: τοὺς ἀφηγησαμένους τῶν ἀποστάντων … καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ ἀδικήσαντας, ("who instigated the rebellion … and violated the temples."). See also the Philae decree, Müller (1920) 59–88; Török (1997) 600–7.

48 For royal interaction, see *P.Hausw.* 16 (221/0), where Edfu was used as the center for royal auctions of land. For the location of large cash and grain reserves at Egyptian temples, and the temple of Edfu in particular, see *P.Eleph.* 10, dated 222, and *P.Eleph.* 6, dated 225, which indicates that the temple banks generally held large cash reserves.

49 For rebel use of temples, see Farid (1976). For Ptolemaic use, see Dietze (2000), and from the demotic Philae decree of 186 (Müller 1920): "The king of Upper and Lower Egypt Ptolemy, loved by Ptah, has given many orders and showed considerable care for protecting the temples, in which he stationed Greek troops and soldiers of people who had come to Egypt, who obeyed his orders."

50 The dedication *I.Philae* 1.11 records that the temple of Arensnuphis was rebuilt by the 170's. However, the destruction of the temple may have occurred during a Ptolemaic offensive, since the Nubian king Adikhalamani built onto and made dedications at the structure. For the temple of Arensnuphis, see Vassilika (1989) 49–51. For the temple built by Ptolemy III at Medamud, see Vandorpe (1995).

51 Priests and temples targeted by attacks: *P.Amh.* 2.30, *P.Tebt.* 3.1.781. See also Veïsse (2005).

52 Veïsse (2004) 228–40; Pestman (1965) 157–70. The impression one gets from the available sources is that the Theban priests were not leaders of the revolt, but were to some degree cooperative.

53 The Oracle of the Potter, the Oracle of the Lamb, and the Demotic Chronicle. Of these, the Demotic Chronicle is thought to be the earliest, and may pre-date the Great Revolt. On these, see Koenen (1970); (1984a); Johnson (1974); Lloyd (1982); O'Connell (1983).

rebellion in the 160's, the father of a captured insurgent claimed that his son was "bewitched by the priests" into joining the rebels.[54]

Priests were not the only Egyptians who could be considered collaborators with or beneficiaries of the Ptolemaic regime. In the Thebaid, tax collectors must have faced harassment and violence, since tax collection there stopped completely in 207.[55] Even royal farmers, peasants who worked the land controlled by the crown, became rebel targets. Papyrus *P.Mich*. 18.776, dated 194, contains an intriguing report of linked assaults in the region around Mouchis, a town in the Fayum. An Egyptian official, Peteminos, one of the administrators of Mouchis and its environs, was part of a group patrolling the village at dusk, when they came across a wounded royal farmer.[56] He told them he had been wounded on a road beside the main canal into town. Hearing where he had been wounded, they proceeded in that direction, where they found another wounded farmer. On examination, neither man admitted to knowing who assaulted them. By that time a crowd had gathered from the town. Some from the crowd accused the patrolling party of wounding the men.[57] The next day, however, villagers gave Peteminos the names of the attackers, four young men from the same village: Pasis son of Symtheus, Horos son of Onnophris, Pasis son of Manres, and Horos son of Apunchis. By then, the suspects had already escaped. In this case, it is unlikely that the royal farmers did not recognize their attackers or that no one from the village knew who had made the assaults. And yet the wounded men denied knowing them, villagers suggested agents of the state were at fault, and they only provided the names of the attackers after permitting them time to escape.

The attackers at Mouchis may have been apprehended soon after. The same four men were listed together in a list Peteminos made of the farmers in the

54 *P.Hamb*. 1.91. The prisoners and priests were from Pois, a village not far from Tebetnoi, the site of the skirmish. A Ptolemaic soldier thought he deserved the ransom for several prisoners, but the father's plea seemed to have gotten the prisoner released, see lines 22–24: ἐνθ̣' [ἡ αἰχμάλ]ωτος ψυχαγωγηθεῖ̣σ̣α̣ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκ τῆς κώμης ἱερέων.

55 *O.Bodl*. 1.41, 12 September 207, is the last tax record from the Thebaid for seventeen years. See Pestman (1995) 103.

56 Lines 1–2: ἐφοδευόντων ἡμῶν τὴν κώμην νυκτὶ συνηντήσαμεν Πᾶσις Παώπιος βασιλικὸς γεωργὸς τετραυματισμένος, ("When we were patrolling the village at nightfall we encountered Pasis son of Paopis, a royal farmer, who had been wounded.").

57 Lines 5–6: οὐκ ἔφησαν ἐπιγινώσκειν αὐτούς· ἀλλ' ἔφησαν οἵτινες αὐτῶν τετραυμάτισται ὑφ' ἡμῶν κόντοις, ("They claimed they did not recognize them. But some of them said he was wounded by us with *kontoi.*") In papyri, the *kontos* is usually meant to be a barge pole. *Kontos* was also used for two-handed spears, particularly those of the cavalry, although the Macedonian *sarissa* was a particular type of *kontos*. This could also be a clerical mistake, and Peteminos copied ὑφ' ἡμῶν from the previous line accidentally.

area (*P.Heid*. 6.374 lines 140–144). They appear to be the only names on a small sub-section of the list, under the heading "11th," presumably the regnal year (194) followed by an illegible word, then their four names, in precisely the same order as in Peteminos' report. After their names, the last line reads τρεῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀ̣ποστ, for which the most reasonable restoration is τρεῖς ἐκ τῶν ἀ̣ποστ(ατῶν), "three from the rebels."[58] Whether the four men considered themselves rebels is unclear, but it is fairly clear Peteminos did. The assault on farmers may be a fairly representative portrait of insurgent violence during the revolt.[59] The rebels attacked isolated farmers in the field, and may have used canals and dikes for cover in order to ambush the men. The attacks appear indiscriminate, but they contributed toward insurgent goals: instilling mistrust in the agents of the Ptolemaic regime, and through coercion earning the compliance of civilians.

Direct Violence in the Egyptian Revolt

There is fairly limited evidence for direct violence on the part of the insurgents in the Great Revolt. In Upper Egypt, it is clear that rebel attacks forced Ptolemaic military settlers and garrisoned soldiers to abandon most of their positions. Thebes fell in 205, less than a year after troops abandoned Edfu.[60] What is unclear is the nature of the rebel attacks. In both cases troops were able to withdraw, either to Lower Egypt or to the secure position at Elephantine. With relatively small and isolated garrisons in that region, the rebels may have

58 There are no missing characters after the τ, which indicates that the surviving characters of the last word are an abbreviation. Three would seemingly be an error, since four names are listed, but perhaps the fourth was appended later. Their names seem to have been added to the list after it was first compiled, and the abbreviation is mainly a reflection of space constraints.

59 The land survey (*SB* 24.15972) of the Lykonpolite province, on the border of Ptolemaic- and rebel-held territory in Upper Egypt, revealed that the majority of the population had either been killed or become refugees by the time the rebellion ended.

60 *P.Tor.Choach*. 12 (117) establishes the date of the Ptolemaic evacuation from Thebes as 205. The plaintiff in that case, Hermias son of Ptolemaios son of Hermias, sought to reclaim a house in Thebes his family had occupied 88 years earlier, but abandoned at the start of the revolt, see 5.27–29: τὸν ἑαυτοῦ πατέρα μετηλθαι ἐκ τῆς Διὸς πόλεως μεθ' ἑτέρων στρατιωτῶν εἰς τοὺς ἄνω τόπους ἐ̣ν̣ τῆι γενομένηι ταραχῆι ἐπὶ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν βασιλέων, θεοῦ Ἐπιφανοῦς ... συντρέχειν ἔτη πρὸς τὰ πη, ("his father came from Diospolis (Thebes) with the other soldiers to the Upper regions (Elephantine) in the Disturbance which occurred in the reign of the father of the kings, the god Epiphanes ... which comes to 88 years ago.")

needed only subversion and indirect violence to secure their own hold on much of the Thebaid.[61]

Most of the evidence for direct violence by insurgents in Egypt relates to defensive actions. After seizing the Thebaid and crowning their leader as pharaoh, the southern rebels established a frontier zone at Abydos, and used the sprawling temple complex as a fortified refuge.[62] From it they could launch attacks on the Greek city Ptolemais, just 25 miles away. When Ptolemaic forces advanced south, the rebels defended Abydos for perhaps a year or more.[63] After losing Abydos, it seems likely that the rebels fought what was, contrary to Polybius' description of the war, the first of its two pitched battles. The battle, fought near Koptos, is known only from the metered epitaph for a Macedonian commander and his son, two of the Ptolemaic casualties (*Bernand, Inscr. Metr.* 4 = *SEG* 35.1604).[64] The Macedonian, Ptolemaios, ἀνὰ κρατερήν φυλόπιδα φθίμενον, "fell during a mighty battle" and a θούριον ἆγον "furious struggle," but only after ἄσπετα φῦλα κανόντας, "striking down innumerable foes" (*Bernand, Inscr. Metr.* 4). Allowing some epic exaggeration, it is

61 Direct attacks are also conceivable. At some point in the third century a force of Ethiopians attacked and besieged a military outpost near Elephantine, and were only routed after friendly reinforcements arrived, see *SB* 3.6134.

62 The graffito *P.Recueil* 11 confirms that insurgent soldiers were using Abydos as a base in the year 200.

63 *I.Memnoneion* 32 records a soldier's presence at the main temple on 2 August 199, ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀβύδου πολιορκίας, "during the siege of Abydos." The siege probably came to an end about that time. *I.Memn.* 174, 388, and 399 are soldiers' inscriptions that name their unit (e.g., "The Galatians" in 174) or commander (e.g., Aristomenes in 388, Aristippos in 399), and could relate to the siege. *P.Recueil* 11 does not necessarily prove that the Ptolemaic siege began in 200, but if *I.Memn.* 138 and 147, dedications dated Pharmouthi 5 of year 5 by a Boiotian and an Orthosian, respectively, date to May 11 that year, the siege may have lasted more than a year.

64 Bernand (1969) 49–52; Barbantani (2010) 111–2. The text has generally been dated to the first half of the second century. The son's role as a regular soldier carrying a standard indicates a date prior to the Ptolemaic military reforms, for which see Sekunda (2001), one result of which was that standard bearers became officers ἔξω τάξεων, an officer class first attested in Egypt in 188 (*P.Mil.* 2.22). The only other scenario that could fit the inscription's details would be battles otherwise unattested during the second Ptolemaic campaign of the Great Revolt, during which a battle was fought, but near Syene rather than Koptos, or during the invasion of Antiochus IV in 168. The last is less likely, considering the phrase ἄσπετα φῦλα, which seems mainly to have been used for barbarian foes, see Dionysios Perieg. *Orb.Descr.* 138, 186; Nonnus *Dion.* 48.51.

likely that a battle was fought and won by the Ptolemaic army as it moved from Abydos toward Thebes.[65]

The Egyptian insurgents were better off fighting direct actions against exposed Ptolemaic forces, as opposed to Ptolemaic armies drawn up for battle. The best description of a sizable, organized insurgent operation comes from the papyrus *BGU* 6.1215.[66] Its date and provenance are uncertain, but the end of the third century and Middle Egypt seem most likely.[67] Modern opinion is that the revolt did not extend that far north during the third century, but it should be clear by now that Middle Egypt was the site of a protracted, low-intensity insurgency.[68] In the text, an un-named Greek reports a nighttime assault on a village patrol, followed by assaults on the local fort and the town itself:

> νουμηνίαν δὲ ... [τοὺ]ς̣ φύλα[κ]α̣ς ἐπιθεμένων τῶν Αἰγυ[π]τίων καὶ ἐνεδρ[ε]υ̣σ̣ά̣ν̣τ̣ω̣ν̣ ἐπὶ τὸ φρουρίον τῶν δὲ φυλάκ[ω]ν π̣ρ̣ο̣α̣ι̣σ̣θ̣ο̣-μένων...ρ̣ο̣ θέντ̣ων παρὰ τὸ φρουρίον ἐξέκλιναν ἐπὶ τὰς ἔξω οἰκίας. προσβαλόντες τὸ ὄργ̣ανον πρὸς τὴν Νεχ̣θ̣ε̣ν̣ί̣βιος̣ οἰκί̣α̣ν τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ δρόμου ἐπανέβαινον. τῶν δὲ προαισθομένων ὥστε καὶ μέρος σ̣τ̣ι τοῦ χάρακος ἐνσεῖσαι αὐτοῖς οὕτως τὴν ἀναχώρησιν ποιοῦνται. [γ]είνωσκε δὲ τ̣ο̣ὺ̣ς̣ Αἰγυπτίους μὴ φυλάσσειν τὴν κώμην καθὼς τὴν ἀ̣ρ̣χ̣ὴν ἐτάξαμεν αὐτ̣ο̣ὺ̣[ς] διὰ τ̣ὸ̣ μὴ τὸν Καλλίαν [με]ταδιδόναι μηδ' ἀναφ[ορὰν ποι]ε̣[ῖ]ν̣ ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ἀλλ[ὰ ...]

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65 Ptolemaios also ἐπὶ δυσμενέεσσι Μακηδόνι σύν στρατιώτηι, τοῖο τόθ' ἁγεμόνων, ("led the Macedonian contingent against their foes") Not only is the epitaph evidence that the Ptolemies controlled the field, subsequent events (see the next section, "Combating an Insurgency") show Ptolemaic forces advanced to Thebes by year's end.

66 Veïsse (2004) 7; McGing (1997) 282–83; Hölbl (2001) 57; Peremans (1975) 397; Préaux (1978) 529–30.

67 The name of the Egyptian found in the report, Nechthenibis, is known in the region from the apex of the Delta near Memphis down to the Oxyrhynchite, for which see the *Prosopographia Ptolemaica*, online: <http://www.trismegistos.org/nam/detail.php?record=515>. A town between Memphis and Alexandria in the Delta was called Nechthenibis after its chieftain, while men named Nechthenibis and Kallias, the two names given in 1215, are attested in the late third century in the vicinity of Tholthis and Takona in the Oxyrhynchite. That Kallias died c. 204. His orphaned son's allotment was the subject of the "devastations of foemen" contract.

68 And so most authors have been hesitant to speculate on the origins of the text in question, since the uprising is thought to have been located in Upper Egypt and the Delta, see Alliot (1951) 421–433; Veïsse (2004) xv, 7–11. Whatever doubts there have been about extent of insurgent activity outside Upper Egypt and the Delta, the texts in *P.Taricheutai* = Armoni (2014) have provided confirmation that there were rebels in Middle Egypt from the outset.

> ... on the new moon the Egyptians ambushed the guards and pursued them back to the fort. Because the guards had been warned [that an attack might occur] and ..., the [Egyptians] left off the fort and instead attacked the houses just opposite it. They brought a siege device up to the house of Nechthenibis, which lies along the road. But when a part of the palisade threatened to crash upon them, they made their retreat. But know this: the Egyptians are not now guarding the village as we told them, because Kallias is not communicating [orders to them], nor is he submitting reports to us, but ... (*BGU* 6.1215).

The operation as described exhibits several traits: the use of night as cover, the capacity for some larger-scale operations such as an attack on a patrol or guard-post, and an opportunistic willingness to attack unprotected targets like houses. Their use of some sort of siege device, the ὄργανον, implies organization and (some) skill. The closing lines indicate the attack was not an isolated incident. The Greek author trusted neither the fidelity nor discipline of the local Egyptians, was clearly frustrated with the performance of Kallias as a liaison between self-defense forces and the military command in the region, and feared future attacks might be more successful. As at Mouchis, the loyalty of the villagers was in question.

Combating an Insurgency in Ptolemaic Egypt

The Progress of the Rebellion, 206–198

The Egyptian insurgency against Ptolemaic rule had two epicenters: the Delta in Lower Egypt, and the Thebaid, or Upper Egypt, but Egyptian soldiers and civilians participated in acts of resistance against the regime across the entire length of Egypt. Participation in the insurgency ranged, as shown above, from ἀναχώρησις to armed insurrection. In late 205 the garrison of Thebes fled the city, and the leader of the rebel army in Upper Egypt was proclaimed Pharaoh, and took the messianic name Haronnophris (Hor-wennefer).[69] There are few textual or archaeological indications that the Upper Egyptian rebels under Haronnophris operated a functioning state. There is no evidence for the recruitment, organization, or logistics of rebel fighters, nor for the collection of taxes.[70] It is likely the insurgent state operated mainly off plunder acquired

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69 *Stèle dém. Caire* 38.258 honored the new Pharaoh Haronnophris after his coronation, in about November 205. On the messianic undertones behind the name, see Veïsse (2004) 247.

70 Depauw (2006).

during the advance. The development of an insurgent state may have been hampered by the Ptolemies' uninterrupted control of the Nile, which prevented the Thebaid from becoming a safe and secure haven for a nascent rebel state. Rather, the insurgent haven was in Meroe, beyond the first cataract on the Nile.[71] The kings of Meroe aided the rebels and occupied the former Ptolemaic positions south of Elephantine, but even with their aid the insurgents probably failed to dislodge the Ptolemaic garrison at Elephantine.[72] Nor could they pose a serious threat to the Ptolemaic *polis* of Upper Egypt, Ptolemais, modern El-Minsha. The affairs of Ptolemais during the revolt are not well known, but a papyrus from September 204 refers to aid sent from the Fayum to Ptolemais, both corvée labor καὶ τῆς ἄλλης χ[ο]ρηγίας πρὸς τὴν βο[ή]θειαν τῶν [-.?-], "and additional support for the relief of the [?]" (SB 12.10845). Until the Ptolemaic siege in 200/199, Abydos likely figured as the frontier between Ptolemaic and rebel regions.

The urban, organized resistance of the Delta region provides some level of contrast with the rural "peasant" insurgency of Middle Egypt, and its proximity to Alexandria some contrast with the Thebaid. The Delta interior was home to several Ptolemaic military settlements, including concentrations of Macedonians at Sebennytos and Thmuis.[73] It is likely that most Hellenized military settlements were along the borders of the Delta, from heavily-garrisoned Pelusium facing toward Syria, to Memphis facing up the river, to Alexandria by the sea.[74] Nevertheless, the Egyptian population predominated in the Delta,

71 Garrisons from Pselkis to Syene fell into the hands of the rebels' Nubian allies, led by the kings of Meroe, Arqamani and Adikhalamani, see Farid (1976); Török (2009) 377–411. Török suggested that diminished interest in war elephants in Egypt may have encouraged Meroe to support the rebels (2009) 391.

72 The Theban garrison fled to south, toward Elephantine, according to *P.Tor.Choach.* 11, but one must always suspect the possibility of an error 88 years after the evacuation. Aside from the testimony of *P.Tor.Choach.* 11, the best evidence for a Ptolemaic Elephantine is a marriage contract from 198 with a Ptolemaic prescript (*P.dem.Berl* 13593), but it could easily reflect a recovery of Elephantine related to the campaign into the Thebaid that same year.

73 Sebennytos: SB 1.1106, a dedication by Macedonians and their officers to their un-named unit commander. Thmuis: SEG 2:864, 8:504. For evidence of garrisoned and settled positions in and around the Delta, see the overview in Redon (2014).

74 Aside from the major garrison at Pelusium (Polyb. 15.25.26), there were settlers and a garrison at Boubastis (*P.Frankf.* 7) and likely in the Heliopolite province, which Jewish settlers inhabited later, and troops stationed or settled at Athribis and Leontopolis (PSI 4.329, *P.Lond.* 7.1938, 7.1943).

and likely had more military ties than in other regions.[75] The Mendes Stele indicates that many of the Ptolemies' μάχιμοι came from the Delta, particularly from the Mendesian province, and their officers were taken from the aristocratic Egyptian families of the Delta.[76] The leadership of the Delta aristocracy is attested during the revolt as well, where instead of crowning a pharaoh there were numerous δυνάσται (Plb. 22.17.1,4). This word suggests a rebel hierarchy in the Delta, which likely derived from the existing social and military hierarchy. The nature of the violence there is not clear, but by late 198 the Ptolemaic army had cornered a large portion of the rebels at Lykopolis, also called Shekam, a city deep in the Delta.

Ptolemaic State Terror

The Ptolemaic army's handling of the rebellion was predictably brutal. The evidence does not permit a particularly clear reconstruction, but it is clear that the Ptolemies were acquiring some momentum by 198. An army cleared Abydos of rebels late in the summer of 199.[77] Ptolemy's vizier, Aristomenes, may have been in command (*I.Memnoneion* 388).[78] The rebel pharaoh Haronnophris disappeared the same month.[79] The next native pharaoh, Chaonnophris (Ankhwennefer), replaced him in the prescripts of contracts no later than November the same year (*P.Dem.Berl.Kaufv*. 3146).[80] So close to the siege, it seems likely that Haronnophris was killed or captured there, or in the subsequent battle near Koptos. Ptolemaic forces continued their advance on Thebes, which they captured from Chaonnophris' rebels sometime in December 199. The advance extended at least as far as Elephantine, which was in Ptolemaic hands in October 198 (*P.Dem.Berl*. 13593). For a time, the operation in Upper Egypt seemed a clear success.

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75 The second-century papyrus UPZ 1.110, at lines 193–214, affirms that large numbers of μάχιμοι hailed from the Saite province in the western Delta. Its capital, Sais, was a center of rebellion (Polyb. 22.17.4).

76 For the Mendes stele (*I.dem.Cairo* 22181), see Clarysse (2007) 201–6; Klotz (2009) 302; and Fischer-Bovet (2014) 162.

77 *I.Memnoneion* 32 = OGIS 758, dated 2 August 199, may correspond fairly closely with the end of the siege, but indicates the siege was still ongoing at that time.

78 The text is a dedication from a Kretan who came to Abydos accompanying Aristomenes.

79 *P.Dem.Berl.Kaufv*. 3142 + 3144 is the last document dated to the reign of Haronnophris. Like *I.Memnoneion* 32, this text was composed in the month Pauni, 6 July to 4 August.

80 In 199, Thoth covered 12 October–10 November. There is debate whether Haronnophris and Chaonnophris were the same man, see Clarysse (1978); Pestman (1995a).

An indicator of the extent of the success, and of the human cost to the population of Upper Egypt, may lie in a royal decree promulgated 12 November 198. The decree, περὶ τῶν ἐχόντων σώματα Αἰγύπ[τι]α ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν τῇ χώραι ταραχῆς, ("Concerning the possession of Egyptian slaves from the Disturbance in the country," *SB* 20.14659) authorized and governed the enslavement of rebels.[81] The legal possession of Egyptian slaves would have rewarded the soldiers from the campaign in Upper Egypt, raised money for the state through selling the slaves at auction then levying taxes on the purchase, and impressed upon the civilian population of Egypt the danger that lay in collaborating with insurgents.

The threat of slavery became a powerful tool in the offensive against the rebels in the Delta, which accelerated in the year after the decree. By the end of the summer 197, a Ptolemaic army had laid siege to Lykopolis-Shekam and the rebels cornered there. But Lykopolis was deep in the Delta, and the concentration of rebels implies some sort of successful cordon or sweep by Ptolemaic forces. The decree likely played a role. One of the regulations involved in legally possessing an enslaved Egyptian was a one-percent tax called τὴν Δικαι̣άρχου δω̣ρεὰν̣, "the gift-fund of Dikaiarchos" (*P.Col.inv*. 1.480). This was most likely a bonus for the Aetolian pirate and *condotierre* who was in Ptolemaic service from about 202/1 until his execution late in 197. He was infamous for setting up altars to Impiety and Lawlessness at the onset of all his campaigns (Polyb. 18.54).[82] It would not be surprising if the prospect of cash and chattel bolstered mercenaries' determination and piqued their aggression.

The only surviving example of a slave purchased under the decree comes from January 197, when a soldier's wife purchased a heavily scarred 18-year old Egyptian girl for a paltry 500 bronze drachmas (*P.Sijp*. 45). The implications are tremendous: that the auctioned slave was a girl implies the civilian population accused of sheltering or abetting the insurgents could be rounded up as well, that she bore οὐλαὶ πλείους, "many scars," implies the sacking of supposedly-hostile settlements, and that she brought only the price for a few liters of bread implies a flooded market. Her sale also preceded the capture of Lykopolis-Shekam by nearly a year, and her name is unattested in Upper Egypt. This indicates that the campaign in the Delta targeted civilian populations for months, if not years, in order to drive a wedge between the populace and the insurgents.

81 See Koenen (1984b) for discussion.

82 His son Kleitomachos was eponymous priest at Ptolemais in 199/8 (*P.BM Andrews* 3), an indication perhaps that Dikaiarchos was one of the officers involved in the campaign into Upper Egypt.

By fire and sword and chattel irons the Ptolemies advanced in the Delta, and laid siege to the rebels cornered at Lykopolis-Shekam. The siege was conducted in late summer and early autumn in 197. According to the Rosetta decree, the rebels gathered there were well-equipped and the city well-fortified.[83] When the siege began is not entirely clear, but the decree claims it was ἐν ὀλίγωι χρόνωι, "in little time." The city was stormed following the Nile flood, which came toward the end of the summer, and ἀσεβεῖς πάντας διέφθειρεν, "all the impious were massacred" (*OGIS* 90.26). Polybius recorded another detail: the leaders inside Lykopolis surrendered in a bid to save the people in the town (22.17.1–2). They were imprisoned, and the town sacked.

By the start of 196 it looked rather like the heavy-handed Ptolemaic response had worked. Into the ninth year of his reign, Ptolemy V, about fourteen years old, celebrated his official coronation at Alexandria, and in March celebrated his coronation as Pharaoh at Memphis.[84] The ceremony at Memphis produced the Rosetta decree. While at Memphis he presided over the execution of τοὺς ἀφηγησαμένους τῶν ἀποστάντων, "the instigators of the rebellion," which may have included rebels from the Thebaid, the Delta, and perhaps even Middle Egypt (*OGIS* 90.27). After the violent suppression of the revolt, the decree pronounced at Memphis attempted to pacify the country with a series of conciliatory gestures: the crown forgave unpaid taxes, lowered other taxes, freed prisoners, and swore off pressing Egyptians into naval service as rowers (*OGIS* 90.12–17). The decree also declared an amnesty for insurgents, including the μάχιμοι, and promised to restore to them all the property they formerly held (*OGIS* 90.19–20).

It is not clear whether it is right to fault the violence or the concessions, but the insurgency continued. The Thebaid was lost to Chaonnophris' rebels as early as 197, although the rebel rule of Thebes cannot be confirmed by documentary evidence before 194.[85] The reasons for the Ptolemaic withdrawal from the Thebaid are unknown, but likely reflect the very common difficulty

83 *OGIS* 90.22 Λύκων πόλιν τὴν ἐν τῶι Βουσιρίτηι, ἣ ἦν κατειλημμένη καὶ ὠχυρωμένη πρὸς πολιορκίαν ὅπλων τε παραθέσει δαψιλεστέραι καὶ τῆι ἄλληι χορηγίαι πάσηι. "Lykopolis in the Bousirite, which they had seized, fortified against a siege, and in which they had stored up weapons in abundance and every other necessity."

84 *OGIS* 90.6 dates the Rosetta decree to 18 Mecheir, or 24 March, the day after the Pharaonic "Reception of Rule" ceremony in Memphis. The Macedonian coronation, or *anakleteria*, took place in Alexandria, between the first of the regnal year and the ceremony in Memphis, and thus potentially as early as October 197.

85 The last Ptolemaic documents from Thebes date to Hathyr (11 December 198 to 9 January 197), e.g. *P.dem.BM Andrews* 3. The first securely dated document for Chaonnophris after the Ptolemaic occupation is *P.dem.Tor.Botti* 2, from Epeiph (7 August to 5 September) 194.

conventional forces face in sustaining an occupation against an insurgency. Low intensity violence, like the attack at Mouchis, continued in Middle Egypt. And in the Delta, the insurgents reorganized, and within a few years were operating in the vicinity of Sais in the western Delta, less than sixty miles from Alexandria and about thirty from Naukratis.[86] The insurgency had not yet been defeated, and lasted another decade after the Rosetta decree.[87]

Ptolemaic Counterinsurgency

It seems likely that at this point, between 196 and 194, the area from Panopolis, north of Ptolemais near modern Akhmim, north to Lykonpolis, modern Asyut, fell under rebel control. As the new frontier, the vicinity of Lykonpolis became a war-zone between the rebels and Ptolemaic forces. The local populace suffered greatly. No documents tell of the sort of fighting that took place in that region, but the Ptolemies regained control in 191. Near the start of the occupation, Ptolemaic agents surveyed the region because it had not been under administration for several years. The survey reported that τοὺς πλείονας τῶν λαῶν δ̣[ι]α̣φθαρῆναι ... τὴν Χαοννώφριος ταραχὴν ("the greater part of the local populace was massacred [during the] the Troubles of Chaonnophris" SB 24.15972, lines 39–41). The report's claim may be noteworthy for its use of passive voice, which neatly sidestepped responsibility for the massacres. As the next city south from Ptolemaic Hermopolis, Lykonpolis may have been targeted in Ptolemaic punitive raids from 195–191.

Chaonnophris held on in Thebes until at least August 191 (*P.dem.Ehev*. 29). A commander named Ptolemaios led an army that recaptured Thebes then, and began a new occupation.[88] The occupation involved administrative reforms, chief among them surveys of land and the auction of ownerless land. The former owners of lands and properties registered ἐν τοῖς ἀδεσπότοις, or "ownerless," included refugees and slain civilians as well as slain or retreated rebels.[89]

P.dem.BM Andrews 4, which concerns the same individuals and property as *Andrews* 3, is dated by the rule of Chaonnophris, but the regnal year is missing.

86 The activity of insurgents in the area is known mainly from Polyb. 22.17.4, a description of the conclusion of Ptolemaic operations in the area.

87 And possibly longer, as indicated by a monument for Aristonikos dated to 182, for which see Daressy (1911); Veisse (2004) 10–1; Carrez-Maratray (2014). Aristonikos' operations were launched from Naukratis and Diospolis, in the vicinity of the Saite province.

88 Likely Ptolemaios son of Eumenes, see *Thèbes à Syène* 314. On the end of the revolt in the Thebaid, see Alliot (1952); Clarysse (2003); Vandorpe (2014).

89 The property of a refugee in SB 5.8033, the property of slain villagers in SB 24.15972; in *P.Tarich*. 11, petitioners complain that a slain rebel's property, though it [προ]σ̣ηγγε̣λ̣κό̣τω̣ν εἶνα̣[ι ἀ]δ̣έσποτα, "has been proclaimed ownerless" (20–1), had nevertheless been utilized

These projects were assigned to the office of a Greek, Protarchos, who was "over revenues in the Thebaid." His office began auctioning land by November 191, within a few months of the occupation, and taxes were being collected no later than 190.[90] The auctions brought in revenue, but at relatively low prices, the ultimate goal may have been stimulating agricultural activity. Ptolemaios, in command of the occupation, may have begun the process of establishing new army camps, garrisons, forts, and military settlements up and down the Thebaid.[91] But before the settlement of the Thebaid, the Ptolemaic army had to deal with Chaonnophris, and Ptolemaios seems to have been unable to do so.

In March 187, a reinforcing army headed south under its general, Komanos. As it passed Lykonpolis late that month, it took on provisions sufficient to feed a sizable force (*P.Mil.* 2.22).[92] A large supply effort followed in the summer, organized by Protarchos across the Thebaid, aimed at provisioning an army gathering at Syene to the south (*SB* 6.9367).[93] On August 27, Komanos' army defeated Chaonnophris' army south of Syene in the second pitched battle of

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by others without first being seized by the state. The proclamation is likely a reference to royal decrees that governed the management of rebel land, but those regulations probably did not exist when the rebel died (year 2 of Ptolemy V) and may never have been applied in the Fayum, where this property was located. The petitioners were asking for Ptolemaic administrators to apply, retroactively, late-revolt policies to early-revolt property cases.

90 Protarchos: ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν Θηβαΐδα προσόδων (*Chr. Wilck.* 162.1.2–3). *Chr.Wilck.* 162 records one such property, auctioned 7 December 191, but the Greek soldier making the purchase did not put down his first payment for the property until 11 January 186. Other documents attesting the auction of land and houses surveyed as ownerless: *SB* 5.8033, *P.Haun.* 1.11, and *Chr.Mitt.* 32. On land auctions, see Manning (2003) 160–61, and on the administration of the Thebaid beginning under Ptolemaios and Protarchos, see Van't Dack (1949).

91 There were settlers around Lykonpolis (*SB* 10.10224) and Panopolis (*P.Lond.* 2.220, *SB* 1.286) at the entrance to the Thebaid. There was a major camp at Ptolemais, which also oversaw several garrisons (*Chr.Wilck.* 447). At Thebes, the presence of the *phrourarch* Megisthenes in texts from 191 (*Chr.Wilck.* 162.11) and 182 (*P.Haun.* 1.11. ext.2.7) attests the foundation of a permanent garrison there immediately upon occupation. A small military presence was established at Pathyris upstream, and expanded when Krokodilon Polis was built. Troops were also stationed at Edfu (*SB* 8.9681) and Kom Ombo (*OGIS* 114). Ptolemaios was later *strategos* of the upcountry, with garrisons at Syene, Elephantine, Philae, and the Parembole (*Thèbes à Syène* 272, 302, and 320, with *OGIS* 101).

92 The army passed through, headed to Ptolemais, in Mecheir (8 March to 6 April). *P.Col.* 8.208 confirms that Komanos was traveling south from Hermopolis in Mecheir.

93 The document contains 27 fragmentary receipts for grain transported to the army at Syene. The legible ten are sufficient to convey the impression of a broad logistical endeavor.

the revolt. Chaonnophris was captured; his son and the leaders of their Nubian allies were killed on the field (*Philae II*).[94] The insurgents' decision to hazard a pitched battle turned out abysmally for them, and the Ptolemaic settlement of the Thebaid progressed unmolested for decades. Chaonnophris was taken to Memphis and killed, along with other prisoners taken during operations in the Delta (*Philae II*, and Polyb. 22.17.4). The rebel army's departure from irregular warfare may be explained in several ways. Because Ptolemaios' army had seized the capital of the Thebaid four years earlier, human dynamics like desertion or dissent may have compelled Chaonnophris to gamble his position in a pitched battle. Perhaps the presence of Nubian allies emboldened the rebels to fight it out instead of retreating south. For whatever reasons, the Egyptian rebels committed their forces to a pitched battle and were decisively defeated.

The Ptolemaic victory in the Thebaid came, not through overwhelming brutality, but through a combination of reforms designed to increase Ptolemaic legitimacy, Egyptian participation in the Ptolemaic state, and general stability and security. There were three broad areas of reform instituted to end the insurgency. First, the Ptolemaic army of occupation incorporated flexible medium infantry, and employed many of them as semi-professional troops rather than reservists.[95] Second, the Ptolemaic military constructed and maintained a pervasive presence in Upper Egypt through forts, garrisons, and dispersed military settlements for approximately 10,000 soldiers.[96] Third, the Ptolemaic state increased the points of contact between the military and Egyptian society, most visibly by elevating the number and status of Egyptians in the military and by encouraging military patronage of Egyptian temples.[97] A second series of amnesty decrees were issued in the months after the victory (*P.Köln.* 7.313, *I.Philae* 1 and 2). These once more positioned the Ptolemies as the defenders

94 Sethe (1904) 214–30.

95 A reform that eventually grew into "Romanization," for which see Sekunda (2001). For the panoply, see the stele *Alex.Mus.* 20919 and the Sidon stelai (in Sekunda). Early on, the reform involved units of medium infantry paid wages for standing duty. In Upper Egypt, most were Hellenizing Egyptians or Nubians, for whom see Vleeming (1985); Vandorpe (2008).

96 Winnicki (1978); Vandorpe (2014). Winnicki calculated approximately forty military garrisons and military settlements in the Thebaid, although a number of those were not constructed until later in the second century.

97 On this, see Fischer-Bovet (2014) for an argument that the Ptolemaic army became "an engine of socio-economic and cultural integration" in the second century (366). The use of Egyptians in counterinsurgent roles resembles modern COIN doctrine (FM 3–24 7.9), but reflects contemporary demographic, political, and economic conditions rather than prescience.

of Egyptian religion and the Egyptian people, forgave years of unpaid taxes, patronized temples, and pardoned returning rebels.

Conclusion

The patterns of violence during Egyptian ταραχὴ in many respects conformed to modern descriptions of insurgency. While Polybius was generally correct that it was a war of small events, analyzing the conflict as an insurgency reveals several points worthy of note. Violence perpetrated during the revolt indicates several types of rational criteria behind what the Ptolemaic regime perceived and described as anarchic violence. The first principle is the selection of targets with high symbolic and material value. The second principle is aversion to risk. There is no evidence that rebels threw their lives away lightly. Instead, narratives and episodes of violence indicate, with few exceptions, a generally conservative strategy that repeatedly exchanged operational gain for a safe withdrawal, and which preferred short engagements and vulnerable targets. The preference for symbolic, low-risk victories (irregular warfare) is common to most insurgencies, and considered critical for recruiting fighters and collaborators. After all, the ability to execute repeated attacks, no matter their conventional impact in lives or materiel or territory, allowed rebels to undermine Ptolemaic legitimacy and demonstrate weaknesses in the Ptolemaic state's and army's capacity to provide security and stability. These patterns, which arise organically from resistance, have since been clarified by modern studies of insurgency. They are not contingent on such studies, but the patterns and their purposes are more readily recognized through insurgency studies.

In addition to the ways Egyptian rebels chose to be violent, it is also helpful to consider their particular contexts and the ways in which participation in, support for, and organization of the insurgency developed. Here Staniland's social-institutional model of an insurgency's development is useful. He suggests that "the structure of preexisting social networks" appropriated by a developing insurgent movement has a positive correlation to its ideological cohesion, organizational complexity, and operational durability.[98] Two robust social networks, those of the Egyptian μάχιμοι, and those of the Egyptian

98 Staniland (2012) 142, 148–52. While this and many modern works on insurgent networks assume modern communication advances and some influence from Maoist organizational doctrine, Staniland's essential propositions about human relational networks—founded on factors like kinship, culture, employment, ideology, and geography—hold true for the ancient world, and are far superior to resource-flow models that generally depend on modern conventions of capital acquisition.

temples and their priesthoods, held considerable potential for communication, recruitment, and organization in a nascent insurgency. These networks, in their geographic reach, horizontal social engagement, and vertical local significance, resemble Staniland's "overlapping networks." High-ranking individuals even participated in both networks.[99] These networks were not inherently seditious, however, and the insurgents struggled to appropriate them. The conflict between the Ptolemaic state and the rebels was, in large part, a war for the support of a critical mass of each network's members.[100] This leads to one further point about the Egyptian insurgency: many rebels originated from social cohorts that possessed more status, wealth, and mobility than the average Egyptian. For them, the revolt was not a subaltern struggle for any status, any voice, but a violent rejection of Greco-Macedonian supremacy within the military and administrative institutions of Egypt.

The form of the insurgency also reflects regional demographic and geographic characteristics. Proximity to Greek military settlers may have contributed to seditious feeling in Middle Egypt, but also necessitated considerable support in order to challenge Ptolemaic forces in the region. For that reason, insurgent activity functioned mainly to subvert Ptolemaic authority. Acts of sabotage, arson, and assault disrupted both agricultural and bureaucratic activity, but the rebels failed to mobilize a larger movement. Conditions in the Thebaid and Delta were significantly different: fewer Greek settlers and stronger Egyptian social networks encouraged the insurgents to cross over to holding ground and engaging in direct violence much sooner. In both cases the insurgencies successfully, if temporarily, wrested territory from the Ptolemies and even waged direct, violent confrontations with Ptolemaic troops. The Delta, in close proximity to major Ptolemaic cities and military bases, was host to the most vicious actions of the revolt, and insurgent activity persisted there longer than anywhere else.[101] The Thebaid insurgency benefited from a

99 Staniland (2012) 150–2. High-ranking officers were also often priests in ancient Egypt. This phenomenon is well-attested in the Late Dynastic era and in the aftermath of the Great Revolt; whether it was the case prior to the outbreak of the revolt is likely—especially after the expansion of Egyptian military roles under Ptolemy IV—but not conclusively shown by available sources. On Egyptian officer-priests, see Fischer-Bovet (2014) 303–27; Huss (2001) 27.

100 For example, Ptolemy V's benefactions in 197 and 186 provided the greatest number of direct benefits to priests and μάχιμοι.

101 See the operations of Polykrates, then of Aristonikos (Carrez-Maratray 2014). The suitability of the Delta to separatist, insurgent, and criminal activity persisted in the Roman era, even infiltrating popular culture. Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, composed in the second century CE, throws ill-fortuned lovers into the middle of a bandit insurgency in the Delta at the start of book 3, complete with an assault by regime forces on a rebel camp.

strong regional identity, its proximity to its ally in Meroe, and its remoteness from Alexandria, factors that contributed to its organization and centralization. While evidence for insurgent tactics in those regions is scarce, outcomes of conflict in both regions are indicative of sustained irregular warfare. The Ptolemies used mass enslavement of rebel sympathizers in the Delta to break civilians whose bodies they controlled but whose hearts and minds they had lost. The severe depopulation of the Lykonpolite frontier could fit a pattern of raid and reprisal, since no source indicates a major battle there. It is worth noting, however, that aside from the frontier, most of the Thebaid was subject to violent conflict only briefly, during the major campaigns, which marks a sharp contrast with the pervasive violence that beset the Delta.

The ταραχὴ of 207–186 did not result in the overthrow of the Ptolemies or the expulsion of Greeks from Egypt, but it was not without effect. That the rebel pharaohs were slain and their armies scattered while the Ptolemaic regime lasted another 150 years, should not obscure the danger it posed or the changes it brought to the Ptolemaic state. The insurgency took a terrible toll, yet opened the way to reforms otherwise improbable in an autocratic state. The Ptolemaic victory owed much to an evolving response that came to recognize rebellion as violent politics. At the rebellion's height the Ptolemies dented its progress in the Delta with the terrors of massacre and enslavement. But they won the war in the Thebaid by suppressing rebel violence and ameliorating the causes of unrest. While other ταραχαί accompanied periods of dynastic instability or infighting, none lasted long. The regime repeatedly responded to these insurgent movements with both aggressive military action and conciliatory politics. By addressing socioeconomic and cultural factors that mobilized rebel sentiment, the Ptolemies acknowledged the role of insurgency as an engine for popular agency, and negotiated results that lengthened and even strengthened their hold on Egypt. It remains unclear whether the Ptolemies arrived at this approach out of weakness or wisdom, but either way, it does resonate in some ways with the modern concept of population-centric counterinsurgency. Perhaps this beleaguered concept, suspected of offering "nothing but despair, exhaustion, and disappointment,"[102] could find some empirical support in the rhetoric, politics, and military actions of the Ptolemies.[103]

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102 Ucko (2012) 69. See Ucko (2012) 67–78 for a discussion and evaluation of this development. Elsewhere, Duyvesteyn and Rich (2012) 364–9, the editors of *RHIC* expressed concern that COIN merits are moral rather than empirical, whereas empirical evidence tends to support coercive, repressive strategies.

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PART 4

The Roman World

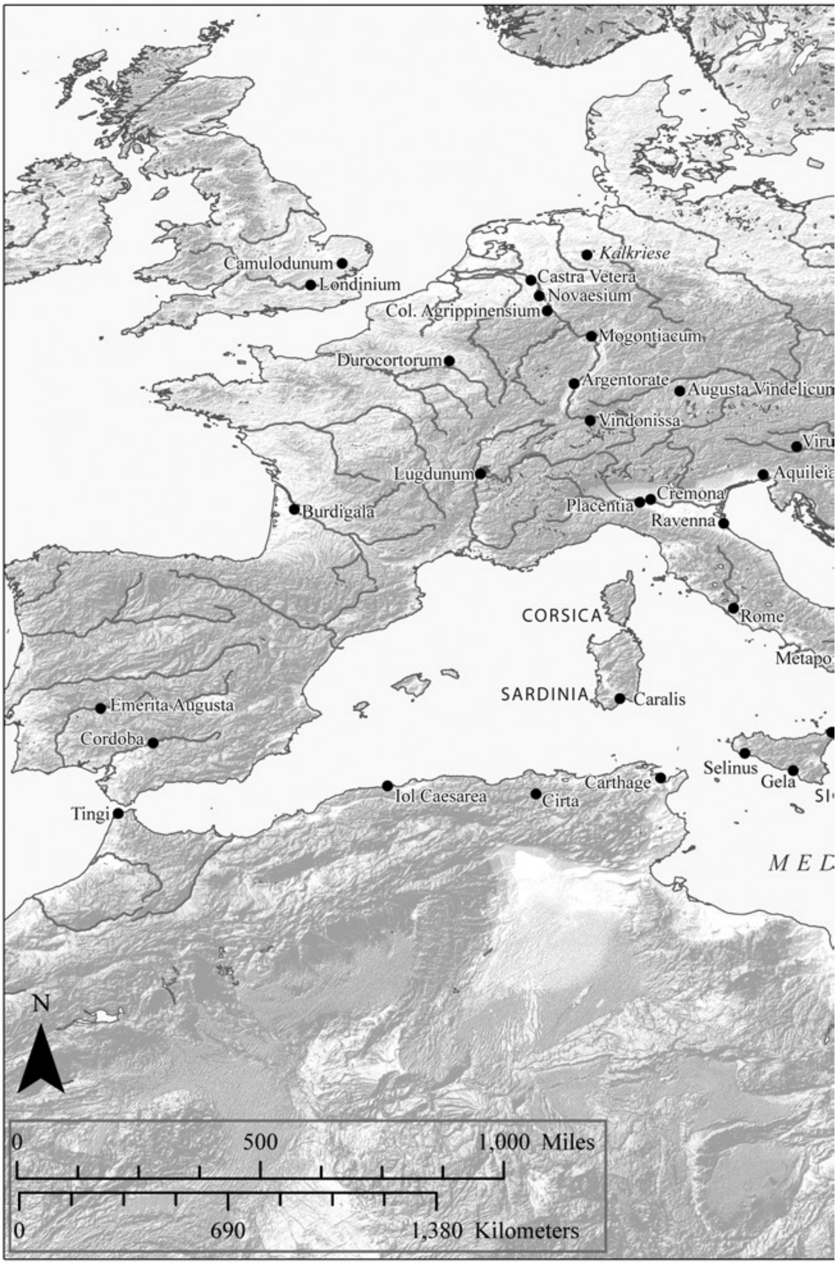


FIGURE 8.1 *The Roman world.*


Carnuntum
Poetovio
Viminacium
Salona
Oescus
Odessus
BLACK SEA
Nicomedia
Thessalonica
Prusa
Ancyra
AEGEAN
SEA
Pergamum
Messana
Gythium
Myra
RHODES
CRETE
Paphos
CYPRUS
Cyrene
Caesarea
Jerusalem
Alexandria
RED SEA
Ancient World Mapping Center © 2013

CHAPTER 8

Insurgency or State Terrorism? The Hispanic Wars in the Second Century BCE[1]

Francisco Marco Simón

Violence, *Virtus* and *Metus Hostium* in Ancient Rome

War and conquest were two key features of the Roman Republic. For 500 years, the Roman armies annually left to fight, and war was the best business for the state, the best opportunity to achieve *gloria, fama*, and *virtus* which permitted access to the highest magistracies. And Roman glory depended directly on an Enemy's disgrace. Hence the importance in Roman praxis of politics based on terror and fear.

There is a typical distinction[2] between "terrorism from above"—attributable to states—and "terrorism from below"—attributable to individuals or groups outside the scope of the state. The former is more important over the course of history and has left the greatest number of victims,[3] while the latter has been considered a "strategy of insurgence" which often takes the form of "guerrilla wars"[4]—terms which the Graeco-Latin sources used to describe the concept of Lusitanian and Celtiberian resistance to conquest by the Romans.[5] There are also other authors who define the act of terrorism as something which basically targets civilian victims.[6] In any case, with the exception of the recent conference in Cividale del Friuli,[7] very little attention has been paid to the phenomenon of terrorism in antiquity.[8]

1 This paper is a larger version of a previous one (Marco Simón 2006) presented in the "Terror et Pavor" colloquium organized by the la Fondazione Canussio in Cividale del Friuli.

2 Webel (2004) 9.

3 Chaliand and Blin (2007) 6.

4 Merari (2007).

5 The main sources of information for the wars of this period are Livy (books 33–45 and *Per*. 47–67), and, above all, Appian (*Hisp*., books 42–100), besides Diodorus Siculus (books 29–33), Florus (1.33–1.43) and Orosius (4.20–5.13). All dates are BCE unless otherwise indicated.

6 Carr (2003) 66–7.

7 Urso (2006).

8 See Brice, chapter one in this volume.

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Should a violent act planned by the state's political body be considered terrorism? Authors such as Maxwell rebuff this idea, insisting that there needs to be a "clandestine" factor.[9] From their point of view, by its very nature the campaign of destruction by Rome was not one of terrorism.

However, Diodorus Siculus, in a passage that ultimately refers to Polybius (Diod. Sic. 32.2 and 4), establishes a close link between hegemony and violence used to intimidate and imperialism and terrorism, discerning three stages in the development of an imperial system: hegemony, acquired through *andreia* and *synesis*, which grew through *epieikeia* and *philanthropia*, but was ensured through terror (*phobos* and *kataplexis*). This third stage is exemplified by the sources with the destruction of Olynthus and of Thebes by Philip II and Alexander, respectively, and with those of Corinth, Carthage, and Numantia in the case of Rome.[10]

The destruction of a city, as Purcell points out,[11] is an action full of great symbolic value. There is proof of this in a passage from Justin about the destruction of Corinth, undertaken in accordance with clearly intimidatory intentions: *ut hoc exemplo ceteris civitatibus omnibus metus novarum rerum incuteretur* (Just. *Epit.* 34.2.6). The thesis by which the destruction of Carthage and Corinth in 146 and Numantia in 133 would have pursued the objective to spread such fear that it would condition the political behavior of other members of the Empire, I feel, allows them to be clearly conceptualized in terms of terrorism.[12]

The army—an arena for aristocratic competition, a nexus of interests of rich and poor alike—was, at once, a unique feature in the stimulation and strengthening of the Roman identity,[13] and no less important than participation in religious festivals or the political events that were characteristic of the polis that required the presence of the *Vrbs* citizen—something that few could allow themselves. On the contrary, the legions permitted the cross-over of local identities and a dual affirmation of Roman identity with respect to enemies and allies alike.

A rhetorician of the fourth Century, Themistius, wrote the following: "That which divides the Scythians from the Romans is not a river, nor a lake, nor a

9 Maxwell (2003) 16.

10 Thornton (2006) 158.

11 Purcell (1995) 133.

12 Likewise, regarding diverse Roman actions: Thornton (2006) 159; Aron (1968); Desideri (2002); Champion (2004) 42; Brice, chapter one in this volume.

13 Harris (1971); (1979); Rosenstein (1990); (1999).

wall—as these may be opened, traversed or crossed—but fear, that no one who has ever felt weaker may overcome," (Themist. *Or*. 10.138 D).[14]

These ideas, while expressed by an author from a time greatly after the one covered here, may serve perfectly to illustrate the key importance of terror and revenge as instruments to maintain the image of Imperial Rome. This importance has not received due attention in the historiography, other than in very recent examinations.[15]

The Roman authorities felt that military strategy would not work—or, at least, not optimally—unless the barbarians felt fear. Only thus, feeling terror in the face of the mighty Roman war machine, could it be ensured their promises would be kept and, definitively, their peace with Rome that, consequently, could only be ensured through aggression.[16] That this was so was proven by a famous passage by Polybius, which will serve to lead us directly into the Hispanic topic under discussion.

On occasion of the taking of Carthago Nova by P. Cornelius Scipio in 209, Polybius wrote the following:

> When Scipio thought that a sufficient number of troops had entered he sent most of them, *as is the Roman custom*, against the inhabitants of the city with orders to kill all they encountered, sparing none, and not to start pillaging until the signal was given. They do this, I think, to inspire terror (*katapléxeos chárin*), so that when towns are taken by the Romans one may often see not only the corpses of human beings, but dogs cut in half, and the dismembered limbs of other animals, and on this occasion such scenes were very many owing to the numbers of those in the place (Polyb. 10.15.4–7; transl. W. R. Paton; italics mine).

What can be deduced from the Polybius text is that it was customary for the Romans to kill all the inhabitants of a city conquered through an assault, something that Scipio had already done in Iliturgis in 212 (Livy 28.20.6–7), prior to moving onto the second stage in the capture of the city—sacking (*direptio*),

14 A similar conception in *Pan Lat.* 6 (7).11: "*Inde igitur est. Imperator, pax ista que fruimur. Neque enim iam Rheni gurgitibus, sed* ***nominis tui terrore*** *munimur*" (emphasis mine).

15 Wheeler (1993); Mattern (1999); Isaac (2004).

16 Mattern (1999) 119. The *tumultus*, that state declaration of defensive trepidation and preparation for the barbarian invasion that constituted a typically Roman formalization of terror, is an expression of the fear and anxiety retained within the collective memory of the Romans themselves as a result of the Gallic invasion of 390, Rankin (1987) 103; Golden (2013) 42–86.

which implied unlimited freedom for the soldiers to kill, sack and rape.[17] The massacre would principally have affected the men of weapons-bearing age, as the killing of women and youths of either sex would not have been useful with regard to the next stage of the sacking, in which rape held such importance.[18] Indeed, the massacring of all adult males is what is recorded in the sources for the cases of Leontini in 231 (Livy 24.30.4), Cauca in 151 (App. *Hisp*. 52), Corinth in 146 (Paus. 7.16.8; Zonar. 9.31.5–7) and Capsa in 107 (Sall. *Iug*. 91.6–7). The reason for this cruelty—revealed equally in the massacre of all the inhabitants of Orongis by Lucius Scipio in 207 (Livy 28.22)—is the terror instilled in the enemy, paralyzed in the face of the horror experienced and impeded from undertaking any new action against troops that practiced such extreme cruelty. In fact, the immediate result of this determination in Carthago Nova was the surrender of Castulo.[19]

The strategy of dissuasion through terror is a psychological recourse traditionally used by the Romans, though, obviously, not just by them.[20] As its army was genuinely stretched to attend to the need for expansion, the conquering Republic used the psychological resource of fear as a strategy (though, of course, not always as they alternated this with diplomacy depending on the circumstances). This terror strategy that we will analyze in the ambit of the Celtiberian and Lusitanian wars was combined with the features of a value system that defined Roman self-representation. When Cicero alludes to the historical causes that lay behind Roman wars, he speaks of *honos, dignitas, imperium, fama,* and *caput* (in the sense of survival) (Cic. *Off*. 1.38), and the *deditio* forms part of this self-same ethical system.[21] The great generals of the Republic registered the many lists of *deditiones* received due to the great prestige that this type of surrender engendered. Only following unconditional surrender achieved through fear of Rome could this latter, through the corresponding *imperator*, exercise the clemency through which they were to derive the gratitude of the vanquished.

The *deditio* constituted at the middle of the second century a prerequisite for the acceptance of peace by the Senate. The unconditional surrender

17 Levithan (2013).
18 Ziolkowski (1993).
19 Gracia Alonso (2006) 71.
20 A paradigmatic case is that of the Assyrians. The traditional view of the Assyrian Empire is that of a military "machine" that spread terror and destruction, and such is shown in the "celebratory apparatus," Liverani (1991) 818–23 and 153. Some modern examples of this recognized phenomenon, in Metz (2012).
21 Fluri (1969); Dalheim (1991); Nörr (1989); Ziegler (1991); Rosenstein (2007).

(*deditio*) to the Roman troops is a key element in the Roman mentality that translates two basic concepts of their worldview and their self-representation. On one hand the *maiestas Populi Romani*, resulting in the reversibility in practice of the terms of agreements with the vanquished depending on the sovereign will of Rome.[22] On the other, the ideal of the Roman *fides*, which explains why our sources designate what is an unconditional surrender as "*venire in fidem*," a self-delivery to the *fides* of a higher power that is recognized not only by the force of the arms, but by a kind of moral superiority translated into the concept of "*pium justumque bellum*" and the acceptance of that moral priority by the vanquished.[23]

Intimidation and Terror in *Hispania*

Compared to the use of a decidedly more diplomatic strategy in the East or in Hispania itself in earlier times by Sempronius Gracchus or Claudius Marcellus, the Celtiberian and Lusitanian wars of the middle decades of the second century constitute an excellent example of a policy based on intimidation and terror towards a barbarian enemy, about which we are mainly informed by Appian.[24] Obviously, this policy was nothing new: the example of M. Porcius Cato will suffice to demonstrate this. Upon disembarking in Ampurias in 195, the consul left the city and "burnt and devastated the fields of the enemy, giving rise to flight and terror throughout."[25]

Following the first period of wars between 182 and 178, the 25 years of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus' peace owed more to the demands on the Roman armies from other Mediterranean fronts than to a degree of sympathy towards the indigenous population. Once those fronts were closed—with the destruction

22 This reversibility is expressed through the clause "*dum populus Romanus senatusque vellet*" ("as long as the will of the people and senate of Rome"), which is known through literary sources of the time of Ti. Sempronius Gracchus (App. *Hisp*. 44) and particularly through the decree of *imperatores* L. Aemilius Paullus and L. Caesius on the Alcantara bronze (Nörr 1989), which expresses well the reversability of the condition of the accord.

23 García Riaza (2012) 163–6. This unconditional surrender could be compensated later by the returning (*restitutio*) of their personal freedom and their property by the *imperator*, and even by his defence against third parties by Rome, in a process that could eventually end in the integration of the vanquished. Salinas de Frías (1986); Ciprés (1993); García Riaza (2002).

24 Hahn (1982); Gómez Espelosín (1993); Richardson (2000).

25 Livy 34.9.13: *Profectus ab Emporiis agros hostium urit vastatque, omnia fuga et terrore complet.*

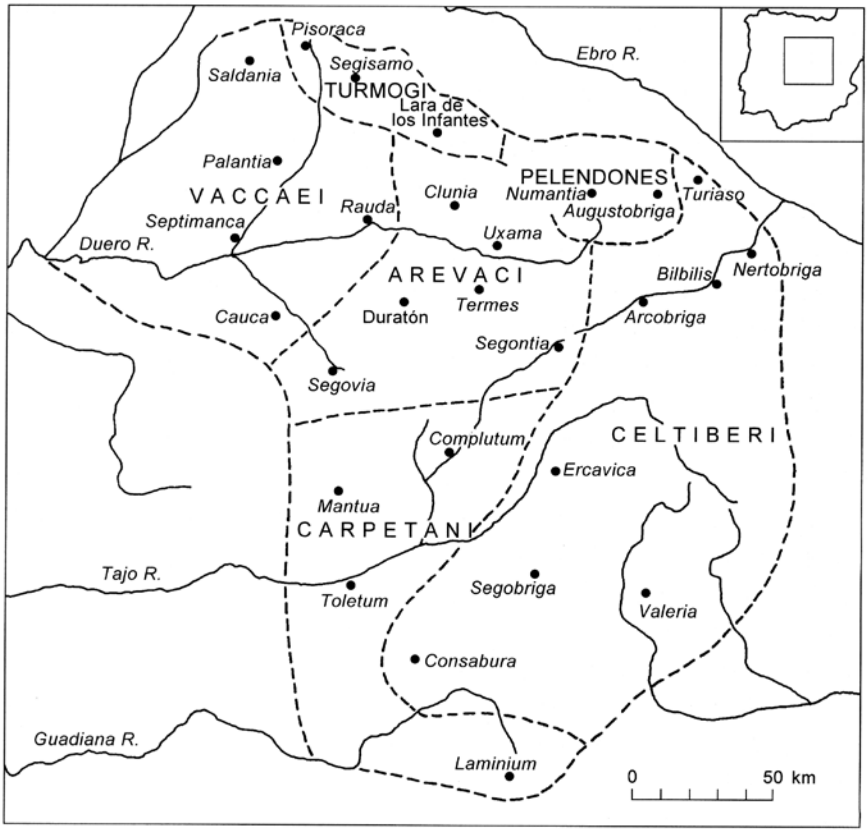


FIGURE 8.2 *The Celtiberian and neighbouring peoples in Central Spain (after L. A. Curchin (2003), 91, fig. 4.8) (Copyright © 2004 Leonard A. Curchin).*

of Corinth and Carthage as the paradigms of this closure—it would be the pressure of the senatorial elite that would cause the renewal of hostilities in Celtiberia to obtain military glory, political prestige and economic benefits),[26] in the same way that signing the Apamea peace agreement in 188 had left the Romans with freedom to intervene in 182. The character of a state enterprise aware of war seems clear, as can be deduced from the initiative to modify the date for the investiture of consuls (moved from 1 March to 1 January), the large body of assets of Q. Fulvius Nobilior and the instructions from the senatorial authorities to the *imperatores* to demand unconditional surrender, which, unlike in the age of Gracchus and Marcellus, did not lead to *amicitia* agreements restoring indigenous sovereignty but rather transformed the defeated populations into *civitates stipendiariae*—which served to emphasise

26 Richardson (1986).

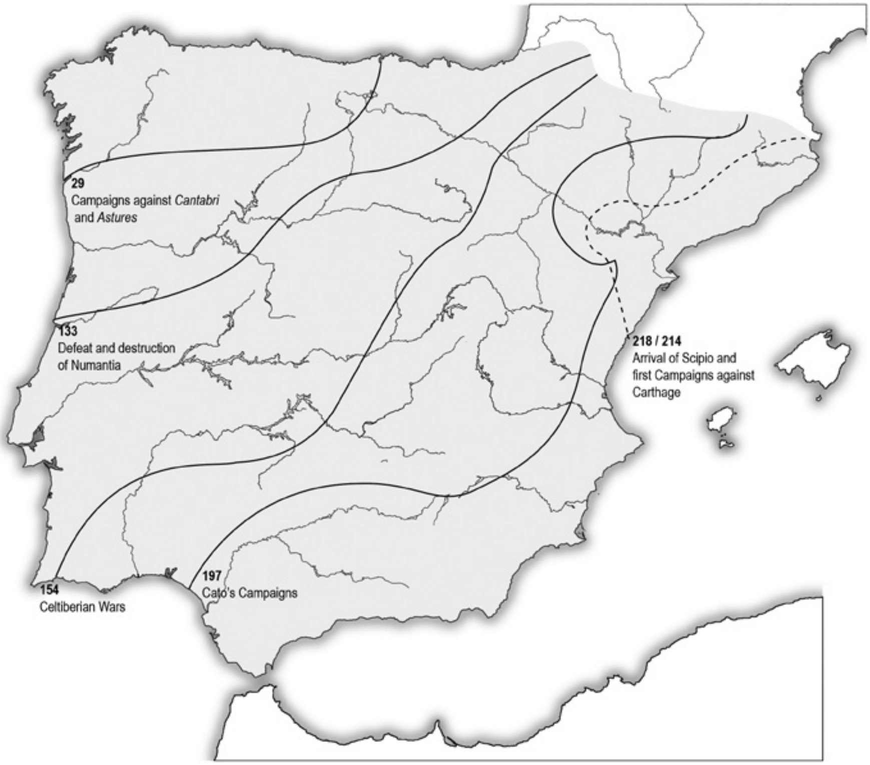


FIGURE 8.3 *The Roman conquest of Hispania (after Marco Simón, Sopeña Genzor and Pina Polo (2014), 490. (Copyright © 2013: Francisco Marco Simón, Gabriel Sopeña Genzor and Francisco Pina Polo).*

Roman control.[27] Likewise, this character of a state enterprise highlighted the difference between the praetorian status of the generals sent before 155 and the consular status of the new *imperatores*.[28]

The only alternative accepted by the Roman state in the middle of the second century to end conflicts was violent subjugation and, in every case, the sanctions imposed depended entirely on the will of the *imperatores* as the indigenous Hispanic peoples lacked the protection inherent in the *deditio* guidelines,[29] whose characteristics we know through the *Tabula Alcantarensis*—datable to 104.[30]

27 García Riaza (2002) 322–3.
28 Richardson (1986) 128.
29 García Riaza (2002) 328.
30 López Melero et al. (1984); Hoyos (1989).

Hand amputations, enslaving the vanquished and indiscriminate killings were the main forms of reprisal taken by the Roman authorities against indigenous resistance, in addition to the sacking and devastation of cities.[31] Below, we study the documents from the sources.

It is no coincidence that hand amputation, though already documented in the siege of Selinus with regard to the Carthaginian Iberian mercenaries (Diod. Sic. 13.57. 1–5),[32] is apparent in the majority of the documents in the middle of the second century. This was a practice that, like the decapitation of the vanquished,[33] was strongly implemented among the Hispanic peoples[34] and not just in the Indo-European area as, in fact, the most interesting iconographic evidence is present in the Iberian region of Aragon (stelae from El Palao—Alcañiz, Teruel—and from La Vispesa—between Binéfar and Tamarite de Litera, Huesca.[35] Strabo shows it as typical of the Lusitanians from the western Iberian Peninsula to cut off the right hand of their prisoners and enshrine it as an offering (Strab. 3.3.6).[36]

The importance of this amputation is explained from the consideration of the right hand (or head) as *pars pro toto* of the enemy. In an agonistic society structured into warrior elites,[37] the right hand was of capital symbolic importance in that it was identified with the weapon. A text by Florus clearly illustrates this: the Numantines and Segedans, ordered to hand over their weapons, vehemently refused, stating that this was the equivalent of amputating their hands, and battle was immediately recommenced (Flor. 1.34.4).[38] For his part, Aurelius Victor (*De Vir. Ill.* 59) indicated that the handing over of an enemy's

31 García Riaza (2002) 226–66.

32 "The mercenaries, keeping to the customs of their people, mutilated the cadavers; some of them had bundles of hands cut from their enemies tied to their belts, as well as their heads cleaved onto their lances."

33 Sopeña Genzor (1995). For anthropological assessment of the right hand: Herz (1990).

34 The excavation of the hillfort of La Hoya (Laguardia, Álava), close to the upper Ebro river and violently destroyed in the third century, brought to light amputated and decapitated cadavers in different areas, Sopeña Genzor (2009) 273.

35 Alfayé Villa (2004).

36 Equally, the "lunula" (breast plate) from Chao de Lamas, kept in the National Archaeological Museum in Madrid, has, aside from heads about to be devoured by birds of prey, a human figure with mutilated hands and lower extremities: Marco Simón (1998) particularly 393–5.

37 Sopeña Genzor (1995); (2009); Ciprés (2002) 81–4.

38 *In legitimi foederis reptium iussi arma demonere, hoc sic a barbaris acceptum, quasi manus abscinderentur, itaque statim Megavarico fortísimo duce ad arma conversi.*



FIGURE 8.4 *The monument of La Vispesa (Tamarite de Litera, Huesca),* II–I BCE. *Museo Arqueológico de Huesca. Besides a highly formalized Iberian inscription, the scenes depict amputated hands as well as a gryphon devouring the mutilated corpses of warriors.*
PHOTO: F. MARCO SIMÓN.

right hand was a requisite demanded by a Numantine father to give his daughter's hand in marriage to a man who had thus demonstrated his bravery.[39]

However, the loss of the right hand—symbol of *fides* for the Romans, as we know (Tac. *Hist*. 1.54.1)—is also from the Roman perspective a symbol of ignominy as opposed to the *dextrarum iunctio* which served to seal pacts (such as that of Q. Occius and the Celtiberian Pyressius / Tyresius in 143–142) (Livy *Ox*. 53; Val. Max. 3.2.21) and which comprise some hospitality tesserae found in Celtiberia and its surroundings.[40]

The sources provide us with two main episodes of the amputation of right hands by Roman *imperatores*. Proconsul Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus, having cordially invited 500 Hispanic *principes* from the peoples he had subjugated, cut off their hands in a heinous act—the implication of which was the breaking of the *fides* (Oros. 5.4.12).[41] This text by Orosius seems to echo the episode, better documented by Appian, in which Servilianus, having taken the cities of Iscabia, Obucola, and Gemella—allied with the Lusitanian warlord Viriatus—cut off the heads of 500 of the 10,000 captives and sold the remainder (App. *Hisp.* 68; Val. Max. 2. 17.11; Front. 4.1.42).[42] The second case is that of the 400 youths (*néoi*) from the Celtiberian city of Lutia whose hands were removed by Scipio Aemilianus because they had been in favor of supporting Numantia against the wishes of their elders (*presbyteroi*) (App. *Hisp*. 94). These measures may be considered an expedient way to control the masses in situations of military tension. However, amputation of the right hand as punishment was also practised by the Romans[43] even with their own soldiers: in 139,

39 *Eo die Numantini forte solemni nuptum filias locabant et unam speciosam suobus competentibus pater puellae condiciones tulit, ut ei illa nubertet qui hostis dexteram attulisset.*

40 Specifically interlinked hands or the right hand appear as the backing for three tesserae with text in Celtiberian and on a fourth written in Latin. A total of nearly fifty hospitality tesserae have been found in Celtiberia and surrounding areas, a unique cluster in the Roman Empire; see Simón Cornago (2013).

41 *fecit* (*Servilianus*) *facinus etiam ultimis barbaris Scythiae non dicam Romanae fidei et moderationi execrabile. Quingentis enim principibus eorum, quos societate invitatos deditionis iure susceperat, manus praecidit.*

42 Regarding the practice of decapitation of the vanquished by the Gauls and Celtiberians, showed in the so-called "fibulae of rider and horse" from whose neck hang human heads; see Almagro-Gorbea and Torres Ostiz (2002); this is highlighted by the sources as a key feature of the *feritas Celtica* (Marco Simón 1993).

43 Caesar, who so emphasised his own *clementia*, cut the right hands from his Gallic prisoners (*B Gall.* 8.44).

the consul Popilius cut off the right hand of Roman deserters brought to him by Viriatus (Cass. Dio *fr.* 75).

Enslavement and Complete Destruction: Lucullus, Galba, Aemilianus

The second variation on violent conquest was enslavement which, in general, occurred after the submission of the groups who had resisted the *deditio*.[44] There are five episodes in the sources for the time of the Celtiberian-Lusitanian wars: those of the Lusitanian cities captured by Servilianus in 141, with a bounty of 9,500 slaves (App. *Hist.* 68); the allusion to the fierce resistance of the Bracaran cities in the northwest of the peninsula to D. Junius Brutus around 137 in the face of certain enslavement if they were defeated (App. *Hisp.*72; Vell. Pat. 2. 5.1); the great number of Lusitanians captured by Lucullus near the Straits of Gibraltar (App. *Hisp.* 72); or the members of the group with the bandit Tanginus (App. *Hisp.* 77). The selling of prisoners of war into slavery meant their spatial eradication, though normally the sources omit the name of the destination or the name of the purchaser.[45]

However, it is definitely through the indiscriminate killings that you can best appreciate the strategy of intimidation and terror that was characteristic of the Romans in this "fire war" (*pyrinos pólemos*), as Polybius qualified the *Bellum Numantium*. The examples of the destruction of cities which had undertaken a *deditio* and the consequent collective killings[46] were not just restricted to Carthage in 149—a decision adopted by the Roman senate (App. *Pun.*

44 Volkmann (1961); Marco Simón (1977). It was calculated that Caesar made one million slaves in Gallia: Plut. *Caes.* 15; cf. Brunt (1978) 174. Cicero (*Att.* 4.16.7) wrote that the only type of bounty to expect from a poor island like Britannia was slaves and he delighted with the promise that Quintus made to send him some (*QFr.* 3.7.4). The same author modernized in (*Rep.* 3.37–41) the ideas that had been expressed so clearly in the past by writers such as Aristotle regarding "natural slavery"; imperial dominion is defined the same as the governance of the soul over the body or the master over his slaves; men who are incapable of self-governance are better as the slaves of others. Brunt (1987) 176; Isaac (2004) 170–94.

45 Marco Simón (1977) 95.

46 Obviously, such uses were not restricted to the Romans and seem to constitute one of the uses of war in the ancient world, Hoffner (2002). The complete destruction of Cartala by Hannibal (Livy 21.5.2) meant an application of the principles of psychological warfare, imbuing terror in the other cities in the region. In Saguntum, inhabitants of all ages were exterminated indiscriminately, except for those sold as slaves (Livy 21.14).

128–130)—or to Numantia in 133—a personal decision on the part of the *imperator* (App. *Hisp*. 92–98):[47] consider those of Capsa, destroyed by Marius in 107 (Sall. *Iug*. 91.6–7),[48] or the Amorican Veneti, sold by Caesar (Caes. *B Gall.* 3.10.16).[49]

The two paradigmatic cases of *perfidia* highlighted by the sources themselves are those of Lucullus and Galba. The nomination of L. Licinius Lucullus over his colleague A. Postumius Albinus as governor of Hispania Citerior clearly showed the preponderance of the theses prone to armed intervention supported by characters such as Cato or young Aemilianus.[50] Consequently, the Celtiberian question turning into warfare would be the result of a carefully orchestrated political manoeuvre by a sector of the senate to counter the previous pacifist policy under Marcellus or the military negligence under Nobilior.

Appian portrayed Lucullus as a man who hungered for glory and enrichment, showing that the rationale given for attacking the Vaccaei in the campaign of 151—their incursions against the Carpetani, friends of Rome—were but a pretext. Following the initial defeat of Cauca, a delegation of *presbyteroi* approached Lucullus bearing the crowns and branches of supplicants and asking what they had to do to be friends. Once the conditions of surrender were accepted (delivery of hostages, fines of 100 silver talents, incorporation of the local cavalry into the Roman army, even a garrison inside the walls), Lucullus inserted 2,000 men inside the walls and a good number of the inhabitants were slain and the city sacked (App. *Hisp*. 52):

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47 This repressive, brutal strategy, based on enslavement or annihilation, stimulated the resistance of the indigenous peoples. Focusing exclusively on the period of the Celtiberian and Lusitanian wars or the time immediately preceding it, the Celtiberians from Contobris (*Contrebia Leucade* = Inestrillas, in La Rioja), according to Diodorus' version (33.25), not supported by Appian (*Hisp.* 43), preferred to die with glory in 179 rather than to fall into abject servitude, during the course of Sempronius Gracchus' campaign. The Bracaran women captured during D. Junius Brutus' campaign in 136 killed themselves or slit the throats of their children to avoid slavery (App. *Hisp*. 74); and the Lusitanians from Cinginnia told Brutus that same year that they had no gold to buy their freedom but they did have weapons to defend it (Val. Max. 6.4.1). Naturally, the fiercest *topos* in pursuit of independence would come from Numantia (App. *Hisp*. 95–97; Liv. *Per*. 59; Strab. 3.4.3; Val. Max. 7.6.2 and 7; Sen, *Epist*.7.4.13; Ps. Front.4. 5.23; Flor. 1.34.11; Oros. 5.7.18).

48 The same Gaius Marius had killed over 150,000 Teutons, exterminating their people. (Vell. 2.12.4).

49 His description of the slaughter of Usipetes and Tencteri, in *B Gall.* 4.14ff.

50 García Riaza (2002) 79.

> The next day the elders of the city came out wearing crowns on their heads and bearing olive-branches, and asked Lucullus what they should do to establish friendly relations. He replied that they must give hostages and 100 talents of silver, and furnish a contingent of horse to the Roman army. When all these demands had been complied with, he asked that a Roman garrison should be admitted to the city. When the Vaccaei assented to this he brought in 2,000 soldiers carefully chosen, to whom he gave orders that when they were admitted they should occupy the walls. When this was done, Lucullus introduced the rest of his army and ordered them at the sound of the trumpet to kill all the adult males of the Vaccaei. The latter, invoking the gods who preside over promises and oaths, and upbraiding the perfidy of the Romans, were cruelly slain, only a few out of 20,000 escaping by leaping down the sheer walls at the gates. Lucullus sacked the city and brought infamy upon the Roman name, (transl. H. White).

The accusation of *apistía* did not result in a sanction for the general on his return to the *Vrbs*. Perhaps this had something to do with the temple that Lucullus dedicated to *Felicitas* in the *Velabrum* using the bounty acquired in 149 (App. *Hisp.* 52; Cass. Dio 22.76.2).[51]

The circumstances in this tale correspond perfectly with the slaughter of the Lusitanians undertaken by Servius Sulpicius Galba in 150. Having handed over their weapons in the context of a *deditio* with the offer of peace and land, the Lusitanians were slaughtered en masse while bemoaning the situation and invoking their gods and the loyalty received from Rome (App. *Hisp*. 60). By contrast, other writers allude to mass enslavement with Gallia as the destination (Val. Max. 9.6.29), as a result of the later case against the *imperator*.[52] Galba appears described as *ouk axíos*, on the basis of an *apistía* that Appian fully associates with the barbarians and at odds with the behavior expected of a Roman magistrate.[53] Appian says (*Hisp*. 58) of Marcus Attilius, predecessor of Galba, that "he annihilated 700 Lusitanians, captured Oxtraca and, after sowing terror among the nearby tribes, received everyone with treaties." In turn,

51 Orlin (1997) 131 and 135.

52 Livy *Per*. 59: *Cum L. Scribonius tribunus plebis rogationem promulgaste, ut Lusitani, qui in fidem populo Romano dedidit ab Servio Galba in Galliam venissent, in libertatem restituerenteur, Marco Cato acerrimo suasit*.

53 García Riaza (2002) 244. For the Roman concept of barbarism, the book by Dauge (1981) remains essential reading.

Orosius alludes enlighteningly to the disastrous consequences resulting from Galba's perfidy in Hispania.[54]

Galba's action, defined by the false promise of lands being granted followed by the slaughter or enslavement of the disarmed Lusitanians, flagrantly broke with all the premises of *fides Romana* and resulted in the *rogatio Scribonia de Lusitanis* of 149.[55] According to the proposal of the plebeian tribune Scribonius Libo, the Lusitanians sent to Gallia were to be freed after being entrusted with the *fides* of the Roman nation.[56] This proposal led to a meeting of the legislative assembly in which Q. Fulvius Nobilior spoke in favor of Galba while M. Porcius Cato spoke against him,[57] perhaps, in addition to personal enmity, because of the patronage he exercised in favor of the Hispanics. Galba justified the severity of his actions on the presumption that the Lusitanians were preparing for another war, aware that they had sacrificed a man and a horse.[58] However, Galba managed to avoid condemnation thanks to his wealth (App. *Hisp*. 60).

Nevertheless, the most famous example is that of Numantia. When Scipio Aemilianus reduced the city to cannibalism following an 8 month siege in 133, the Numantines finally agreed to the *deditio*, but Scipio kept 50 prisoners for his triumph, sold the rest and razed the city:

> Having reserved fifty of them for his triumph, Scipio sold the rest and razed the city to the ground. So this Roman general overthrew two most powerful cities—Carthage, by decree of the Senate on account of its greatness, its power, and its advantages by land and sea; Numantia, small and with a sparse population, the Romans knowing nothing about the transaction as yet. He destroyed the latter either because he thought that it would be for the advantage of the Romans, or because he was in a violent rage against the captives, **or, as some think, in order to acquire the**

54 Oros. 4.21.10: "*que res postea universae Hispaniae propter Romanorum perfidiam causa maximi tumultos fuit*."

55 Rotondi (1966) 292.

56 Livy *Per*. 49, *ut Lusitani, qui in fidem populi Romani dedito ab Servio Galba in Galliam venissent, in libertatem restituerentur*.

57 For the corresponding references, García Riaza (2002) 314.

58 Livy *Per*. 49: *equo adque homine suo ritu inmolatis per speciem pacis adoriri exercitum suum in animo habuisse*. On this sacrificial ritual, see García Quintela (1992). Alfayé Villa (2006) studied this information in the context of sacrificial and festive practices that comprised warrior rituals among different peoples around the Peninsula. For an assessment of the sources on human sacrifice in the various territories of the Celtic world, see Marco Simón (1999); and Aldhouse-Green (2001) for the various territories of ancient Europe.

> **glory of two surnames from two great calamities** (*tèn dóxan hegoúmenos diónymon epì toîs megálois gígnesthai kakoîs*). At any rate, the Romans to this day call him *Africanus* and *Numantinus* from the ruin he brought upon those two places, (App. *Hisp*. 98, transl. H. White; emphasis mine).

Appian's text strikes me as incredibly revealing about the intimate connection that their glory had with the deeper disgrace of the enemy for the Romans. In turn, Vegetius extolled the competence of Scipio at having conquered Numantia and burnt all of its inhabitants, such that none of them escaped.[59] Likewise, Florus and Orosius documented a total massacre following the fall of the city (Flor. 1.34.11; Oros. 5.7–18); the latter extolled the bravery of the Numantines and abhorred the Roman cruelty, though his ultimate thoughts on the destruction of Carthage and Numantia as the beginning of the political and moral decadence of Rome is something that probably dates back to Livy—as Zecchini recently highlighted.[60]

The monograph written by the elderly Polybius for the greater glory of Aemilianus on the *bellum Numantinum* has not survived, though we know of it through Cicero (Cic. *Fam*. 5.12.2). In any case, unlike the first Africanus, Aemilianus added *Numantinus* to his African cognomen, thus showing the key role of the Iberian Peninsula in the design of the Roman Empire and his profile as a conqueror.[61]

One fact seems clear from the information in our sources: the attitude of the Roman authorities experienced an evident change over the second century towards the legitimizing of the irregularities committed by the *imperatores*. While the Ligurians enslaved by Popillius Laenas in 173 were freed a year later by the senate,[62] the same was not true for the Lusitanians tricked by Galba 23 years later. Then, at the beginning of the first century, we have evidence of a third state that clearly illustrates the triumph of the cruel *Realpolitik*: when Titus Didius massacred the Celtiberians near Colenda (App. *Hisp*. 100), not only was he not persecuted for it, rather he had the approval of the accompanying senatorial commission who later celebrated the victory. Thus, Roman expansionism reinforced the impunity of the *imperator* and the Celtiberian

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59 Veget. 3.310: *Cum ipsis denique Numantinos capta civitate sic concremavit, ut nullus evaderet*.

60 Zecchini (2003) 37.

61 Torregaray Pagola (2005) 266.

62 Pina Polo (2004) 222.

and Lusitanian wars constituted the best example of this—constituting a turning point in terms of the Roman foreign policy in Hispania.[63]

The cases of Lucullus and Galba, with their corresponding slaughters, enslavement and sackings, meant a serious breach of the Roman *consuetudo* as they had taken place against communities that had shown their willingness to undertake the *deditio in fidem*. The devastation of a population center constituted the expression of complete victory and a passage from Livy (Livy 28.20.7), in my opinion, provides the best summary of what the objective behind these actions was: *delere memoriam hostium sedis*. Destroy the memory of the enemy by destroying his bases.[64] Naturally, the destruction would affect the walls, but also the public buildings which were of great symbolic value—such as the temples and meeting places.[65] However, we must not imagine that every case resulted in utter destruction. In Numantia, in theory razed by Scipio, the archaeological remains from the first century show considerable activity, with a city of 9 hectares, which produced the singular monochromatic and polychromatic pottery.[66] Neither must it be forgotten that death or enslavement were not the only variations used by the Romans to exploit their success as, like Brunt points out, the dead do not pay taxes.[67]

63 García Riaza (2002) 316 and 338. The senate's rejection of the treaties signed with the indigenous peoples and considered unworthy by the Roman *maiestas* is another expression of the hardening of Roman policy, in addition to reflecting the difficulties that sometimes defined the relationship between the senate and the *imperatores* (Eckstein 1987; Rosenstein 1990). The treaty signed by consul Q. Pompey with Numantia in 139, involving delivering hostages and the payment of 30 talents as compensation, was rejected by the senate as the *imperator* had given secret guarantees to the Celtiberians (App. *Hisp.* 79). But the best known example is that of the *foedus Mancinum* of 137 (Appian. *Hisp.* 80; Plut. *Tib. Grac.* 5; *De Vir Ill.* 59), which acquires great importance in Roman historiography because of the intervention of quaestor Tiberius Gracchus and the harshness of the punishment received by consul C. Hostilius Mancinus—handed over ignominiously to the Numantines, García Riaza (2002) 159–71; Rosenstein (1990) 148–9.

64 When it was decided to deport the Ligurians to Samnium (some 500 km from their homeland) in 180, the Ligurians resisted, alleging that expulsion from their homes meant leaving behind their gods and the graves of their ancestors (Liv. 40.38.4–5, *Ligures saepe per legatos deprecati, ne penates, sedem in qua geniti essent, sepulcra maiorum cogerentur relinquere, arma obsides pollicebantur*). For deportation as punishment and an instrument of Roman colonization, see Pina Polo (2004).

65 On the matter of Carthage, the Romans showed their intention of destroying everything except the graves (App. *Hisp.* 89).

66 Jimeno (2005).

67 Brunt (1987) 175.

Key Points in the Roman Terror Strategy

As we have seen, at the time of the Celtiberian and Lusitanian wars recourse to physical suppression of the enemy characterized Roman actions. In fact, this policy of intimidation and terror adapted perfectly to the dual (Graeco-) Roman anthropology which was the polar opposite to the civilized *humanitas* of the Romans and the *feritas* by which Graeco-Latin authors characterized the Celts in general and those of Hispania in particular.[68] This polarity is also reflected in the systematic mention of the Lusitanian peoples as bandits (*latrones, léstai*).[69]

However, additionally, this relatively systematic terror and *metus hostium* strategy responds to a characteristic paradox in the Hispanic landscape in comparison with other key areas of Roman imperialism in the second century: the East, Africa or Gallia and Liguria.[70] On the one hand, the Hispanic bounty seems to have been the poorest, judging by the information provided by Livy for the period from 201 to 167.[71] This would explain the difficulty in finding recruits for the Hispanic front: in 151 the great fear in response to news coming from Hispania caused a crisis in recruitment such that it was necessary to reduce the economic qualification required for an *adsiduus* from 4,000 as to 1500 (Polyb. 35.4.6; Liv. *Per*. 48). In 145 C. Fabius Maximus Aemilianus had difficulty obtaining the levy for the war in Lusitania (App. *Hisp*. 65). But on the other hand, the number of triumphs and ovations documented for Hispania at this time is greatly superior to that of any other theatre of war.[72] This is important in a system such as the Roman one, which based its life and political conception on the *bía*—the physical strength engendered through military successes (anyone who wished to become a magistrate had to have served in the military at least 10 years (Polyb. 1.37.7; 6.19.4), and in which war abroad was a State duty and a fundamental expression of patriotism, as well as the best means by which to obtain *glory* and the consequent recognition (*laus*) necessary to triumph in the contest among the various aristocratic families.[73] In other words, though the Hispanic wars were hardly attractive from a financial point of view, they were very politically profitable for the Roman aristocrats.

68 Marco Simón (1993); Ciprés (1993); Gómez Espelosín, Pérez Lagarcha and Vallejo Girvés (2005) 109–50.

69 Ciprés (1993) 139–41.

70 García Moreno (1987).

71 García Riaza (1999).

72 García Moreno (1987) 231–2.

73 Rich (1993).

In my opinion, these two factors contribute to explaining the extraordinary violence employed by the Roman armies: disenchantment with the scant bounty (the behavior of Lucullus in Cauca may be an example of this), but, also, a thirst for glory against a particularly fierce and indomitable enemy such as the Celtiberians to make them accept the ecumenical dominance of Rome. Did Appian not say that the terrible conclusion in Numantia was due to the desire of Aemilianus to obtain *gloria excelsa* for himself through draconian punishment?

An Archaeological Paradigm of Complete Destruction

Let us now pay attention to archaeology in order to see whether it confirms the practice of a systematized terrorism attested in the literary sources. The recent excavations in the city of Cerro de la Cruz (Almedinilla, Cordoba) have confirmed perfectly in archaeological terms the utterly devastating violence that razed this area in the middle decades of the second century, probably between 150 and 125.[74] Digs between 1985 and 1989 had confirmed an *oppidum* of some 3.5 has. with an impressive collection of objects found *in situ*. However, it was the campaigns between 2006 and 2009 that removed all doubts as to the deliberateness of the fire that totally razed the city.

The definitive irrefutable proof came with the appearance of a number of human remains. Among these were complete skeletons with visible marks from *peri mortem* knife wounds and a further two who had been mutilated, with leg and arm amputations whose violence brings to mind that documented for the prisoners tortured and executed in La Almoina in Valencia around 75.[75] Likewise, bone fragments from individuals were found, three of which had been burnt. The nature of the blows found on the bones corresponds far less with a weapon of the Iberian *falcata* type than with the typical *gladius hispaniensis*, which was used by the Romans from 218,[76] whose terrible injuries are talked about by Livy (31.34).

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74 Quesada Sanz, Muñiz Jaén and López Flores (2014).

75 After (Valencia) was taken by Pompey, his victorious troops went on an orgy of destruction: a Sertorian prisoner was impaled from rectum to neck on a *pilum*; his arms and hands were amputated and his limbs removed from his body. The head of another mutilated prisoner was even placed between his thighs (Ribera Lacomba 1995; Escrivá Chover et al. 2010).

76 Quesada Sanz et al. (2014) 254.

It is also possible that the destruction and abandoning of Cerro de la Cruz in the mid-second century was the result of a violent rivalry between two neighboring Iberian *oppida*—a local war that was not controlled by the Roman authorities. However, this seems highly unlikely for various reasons. On the one hand, total destruction was not a typical way of waging war among the Iberian peoples and even less so in an era characterized by a watchful Roman presence. The overriding conclusion is that the destruction and massacre witnessed in Cerro de la Cruz must be linked to the "Lusitanian wars" (around 155–139). Specifically, it would be connected through the information from Appian about the expulsion of the Roman garrison at Itucci (which can be found in Martos or Torreparedones, both in Jaén province) in 142 by Viriatus (App. *Hisp.* 66), who destroyed the lands of Bastetania. Later came the Roman revenge through a series of punitive operations by consul P. Fabius Maximus Servilianus in 140 (App. *Hisp.* 68), destroying the cities of Gemella, Obucula, and Eisikadia—information confirmed by Valerius Maximus and Orosius (Val. Max. 2.7.11; Oros. 5.4.2). This is the framework that is coherent with the systematic brutal destruction reflected in the excavations.[77] In this context, if the "Romanization" of Baetica shows a friendly face, exemplified in the verses by Virgil,[78] then it is no less evident that—just like the god Janus—it also presented a far more brutal face,[79] something that the verses by Tacitus reveal outstandingly: the Romans could create a desert and call it "peace" (Tac. *Agr.* 32).

The excavations at Castrejón de Capote (Badajoz) revealed that at more or less the same time, i.e. in the mid-second century, the sacred fort of the *Celtici* was utterly destroyed deliberately by the Romans. The central location of this sanctuary is clearly in a land that included the city of Nertobriga. This happened immediately following the celebration of a ritual that included a collective banquet with the sacrifice and consumption of some twenty quadrupeds.[80]

Concluding Remarks

The historiography has developed two contradictory theories to explain the link between terror and civilisation.[81] The first of these, which we could call

77 Quesada Sanz et al. (2014) 264–65.

78 Verg. *Aen.* 6, 847, *Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento, / Hae tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem, / Parcere subiectis et debelare superbos*.

79 Quesada Sanz et al. (2014) 268.

80 Berrocal-Rangel et al. (2014) 278–81.

81 Drury (2004) xi and 131.

"naïve," sets terror and civilization as mortal enemies and divides the world into good and bad, God and Satan (as with, for example, fundamentalism of any kind). According to the second, which we could call "cynical," terror and civilization are intimately linked, rather than opposed. It assumes that terror—spiritual, political or psychological—is the secret behind the success of civilization; fear of violence and death shackles violence and civilization is successful because it fights brutality with greater brutality.

I feel the two explanations are complementary and could serve to explain the self-representation of the Romans and the vision they had of their conquering Republic and the resulting Empire. If the Romans used terror and intimidation, it was within the framework of the ideal in which they believed their lives to be immersed, an ideal of a "profound dignity, even cosmically significant."[82] It is the ideal of *romanitas*, made manifest externally through the *toga* which contrasted with the *bracae* of the Celts and *saga* of the Celtiberians.[83]

Graeco-Roman literary sources give a view of the Celtiberian-Lusitanian Wars (particularly for the period between 155 and 133) on the lines of insurgency (a violent revolt against Rome). This view depends on two key features: the polarity between civilization and barbarism (*humanitas Romana* vs. *feritas Celtica*) and the ideology of a Roman world dominion (*maiestas populi Romani*), under which all resistance to Roman imperialism was considered a form of subversion, even when taking place in areas as yet unconquered or controlled by Rome.

The *orbis terrarum* belonged to Rome.[84] In fact, it is the very notion of *maiestas populi Romani* derived from a cosmological omphalism[85] and an imperial expansion that was understood to be predetermined by the gods that is the factor that explains the possible psychological strategy of terror and intimidation with regard to people who, by living on the periphery of a war zone

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82 Drury (2004) 133.

83 The passages by Strabo about the *stolátoi* or *togátoi* (i.e. about the native population who had chosen the typical apparel of the *humanitas*) are well known (Strab. 3.2.15). The toga served to *cohibere bracchium*, i.e. to impede excessive gesticulation which might be interpreted in terms of violence (Cic. *Pro Caelio* 11; Sen. *Con. Exc.* 5.6; Quintilian 11.3.137), and it was in itself the distinctive dress code of the citizenry. See Amiotti (1992) 127–33; for the Romanization of central Hispania, see, lastly, Curchin (2003).

84 Central to the imagery on the Shield of Aeneas (*Aen.* 8.630–728) is the equation of the city with the world empire: *urbs / orbis.* The *Aeneid* links the wall building of Romulus (1.276–79) with the promised Roman "empire without end" (1.279). See also Ovid. *Fasti* 2.683–84, *Gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo; / Romanae spatium est urbis et orbis idem* (the space for the city of Rome is the same as that of the world).

85 For Roman cosmological superiority, see Catalano (1978).

(which Hispania in the second century was), could not fully understand any other form of treatment. Was it not Virgil who noted the duty of the Roman to pardon the vanquished but to exterminate the proud?[86] The proud are those who do not accept the universal dominion granted to Rome by the gods, who rebel against the same—and this was the case of Numantia, aggravated by the persistent Celtiberian obstinacy.

Running counter to this representation of Hispano-Celts in denigratory terms (*latrones, léstai*) under the "barbarian model" set up for Celtiberians and Lusitanians, an analysis of literary and archaeological sources as well as of their cultural context shows rather that the aim of the Roman authorities was to ensure the *metus hostium* through actions more properly belonging to a kind of state terrorism (hand amputations, slavery, annihilation and other forms of humiliating the vanquished) or an institutionalized violence (*terror, phobos, kataplexis*) that was characteristic of Roman politics in these areas of the West from the middle of the second century and that channelled the aristocratic competition of the Republican *nobiles* in search of *laus, fama*, and *virtus*.

Over and above their specific strategic importance, the Hispanic wars of the second century attained a symbolic dimension in the collective imagination of the Romans. Cicero is a good source to view the place which these wars occupied as milestones in the historical memory of the *Vrbs*.[87] In *De imperio Cn. Pompeii*, written in 66, he alludes to Carthage and Numantia as cities threatening Rome which Scipio destroyed.[88] In a passage from the *Pro Murena* in 63, he qualified them as cities of terror for the Roman Empire;[89] in the IV *Catilinaria*, both cities are qualified as *huic imperio infestissimas* (Cic. Cat. 4.1.21) and in the *IV Philippica*, the destruction of the two cities signifies the step from the Italic expansion to that extra-Italic (Cic. *Phil*. 4.5.13). Even in the later *De Officiis*, written in 44, he argues that the Romans justly destroyed Carthage and Numantia because of the cruelty and ferocity of their inhabitants—though they would have preferred not to have done the same to Corinth (Cic. *Off*. 1.11.35). This is an excellent text in which Corinth is placed on a different level because of the influence of its Greek cultural heritage, compared to the otherness of the Celtiberian *feritas* and the Punic *perfidia* with regard to the fundaments of the Roman civilisation itself. Thus, against the Celtiberians,

86 Verg. *Aen*. 6.853: *parcere subiectis et debellare superbos*.

87 Zecchini (2005) 40–2.

88 Cic. *Leg. Man*. 20.60, *Duas urbes potentissimas quae huic imperio maxime minitabantur, Carthaginem atque Numantiam, ab eodem Scipione esse deletas*.

89 Cic. *Mur*. 28.58, *P. Africanus … duos terrores huius imperi, Carthaginem Numantriamque, deleuerat*.

just as against the Cimbri and the Teutons, the Romans had to fight not for dominion but rather for their very survival (Cic. *Off*. 1.12.38). In short, here we find a far clearer expression than was found implicitly in Polybius: the need to use the *metus hostilis* as a strategy to maintain the Empire.

The Celtibero-Lusitanian wars, particularly the *bellum Numantinum*, provided Polybius—and by extension the Romans—with a "model of barbarism" as a cultural archetype contrary to Roman civilization.[90] The ferocity of the Numantines, the fondness of the Celtiberian nobles for splendid armor and gold or silver jewels, the impossibility of controlling their savage impulses through reason—which translated into acts of cannibalism or mass suicide[91]—are all factors that made up a daguerreotype of extreme barbarism which justified intimidation and terror to establish the natural dominion of Rome,[92] as the step prior to integrating and civilizing the vanquished and their hypothetical conversion into provincials.

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90 For the image of barbarism in Polybius, see Pelegrín Campo (2004); García Moreno (2005). An analysis of the iconography of the defeat of the barbarian in the Late Republican and Early Imperial periods as an expression of holistic triumph and the modernizing of the Roman *virtus* in Marco Simón (2012).

91 The sources highlight the extreme cannibalism of the Numantines (App. *Hisp*. 96; Flor. 1.34.24; Val. Max. 7.6.2) and later, in the context of the Sertorian Wars, of the Calagurritans (Sall. *Hist*. Fr. 3.87; Val. Max. 7.6.3; Iuven. 15.93–108). On these matters, see Salinas de Frías (1995) 434; Curchin (1999); Isaac (2004) 207–11.

92 As late as the fourth century, the Imperial panegyrists celebrated the massacres and genocide against the "strangers at the gate," to use a well-known expression from Haarhoff (1948); see also the references in Isaac (2004) 221–3.

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CHAPTER 9

Roman Counterinsurgency Policy and Practice in Judaea

Frank Russell

The view from Masada is haunting. Below, rubble walls separate Roman order from peaceful desert; above, ghosts of zealots are conjured variously by pilgrim, academic, and politician. The mute rocks and the whispering ghosts still quarrel over how to preserve the memory of the bitter pageant enacted here. How can we understand the actors and the meanings of their roles? The rocks are not simply Roman—they are fragments of the land, acted upon by hands and tools under Roman direction. Nor were the besieged simply Jews—they were a faction who preyed upon Jew and gentile alike. Such distinctions are often a matter of perspective. A legionary of *X Fretensis* may not have been able to distinguish between competing Jewish identities, nor terribly interested in trying to do so. Likewise, academic perspectives that attempt to understand the revolt in religious terms often struggle to generalize Roman attitudes toward the Jews as hostile or benign, since there is a basis for either. A perspective informed by a consideration of insurgency and counterinsurgency, prompted by questions peculiar to that field of study, enhances our ability to examine, differentiate, and understand Roman behaviors and actions in the period leading up to and including the revolt. For instance, the "tolerance" toward the Jews associated with Julius Caesar may be understood not only as a disposition toward a particular ethnicity, but as an imperial policy to avert the threat of insurrection from a minority population—one that may be compared and contrasted with other peoples, like the Iceni, and one that might be compared with the modern COIN "hearts and minds" doctrine.

The Romans, it has been said, relied on state terror to deter incursion and insurgency.[1] Such a generalization has some value, but it fails us in two particulars. Roman behavior cannot be understood simply in national terms—attitudes, policies and behaviors were neither constant over time nor universal in adherence. Furthermore, state terror was only one means, and often not the preferred means, of averting or defusing an insurgency. A study of the Great

1 Expressed, for instance, by Mattern (1999) 116: "For defense the Romans relied mainly, as Themistius suggests, on terror."

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Revolt of the Jews offers us an opportunity to critique and refine our understanding of insurgency and counterinsurgency in the first century of imperial rule. In this chapter, I propose that the Roman response to the Jewish revolt can be clarified by differentiating between particular imperial policies operative at different times. Specifically, there was a shift in Roman policy toward the Jews that can be explained not only by a response to the revolt, but also by dynastic change. There are three phases to this shift. First, the Julio-Claudians attempted to minimize conflict, and hence insurgency, by extending a notable degree of religious tolerance in Judaea, but were impeded in their aims by a number of factors. This policy was suspended during the military operations of Vespasian taken to suppress the Revolt. Finally, the Flavians, in contrast to the preceding dynasty, sought to uphold the restored order by destroying the Temple and attempting to deracinate Judaism, and shifting from cooperation with local religious elites to reliance on an increased military presence in conjunction with proven local allies. These policies proceeded as much from deliberation as cultural norms.

The "Hearts-and-Minds" Oriented Counterinsurgency of the Julio-Claudians

While the Julio-Claudian policy towards the Jewish population of the empire is not unblemished, as its basis was a respect for the religious identity of the Jews, and an element of cooperation with the elites of Judaea. This policy proved relatively successful for the Jews of the diaspora, but ultimately proved problematic in Judaea and its environs, in part because of the failure of the Jewish elites to establish a credible authority,[2] but also because of a discrepancy between the needs and perspectives of emperors on the one hand, and procurators on the other. This discrepancy was a contributing factor to the Jewish revolt of the 60's.

The Julio-Claudians attempted to minimize friction through imperially mandated accommodation—such as the right to be excused from courts on the Sabbath and from military service, the right to gather in synagogues, imperial protection for their synagogues, the right to pay a tax to the Temple at Jerusalem, and privacy within the Holy of Holies (*JA* 16.162–5).[3] The imperial policy was disseminated to local magistrates through circulars via the Roman

2 See Goodman (1993). Mattern (2010) 175–6 emphasizes the mutual interest of emperors and local elites in stability, and the importance of individual relationships.

3 For a comprehensive study of Jewish rights, see Pucci Ben-Zeev (1998).

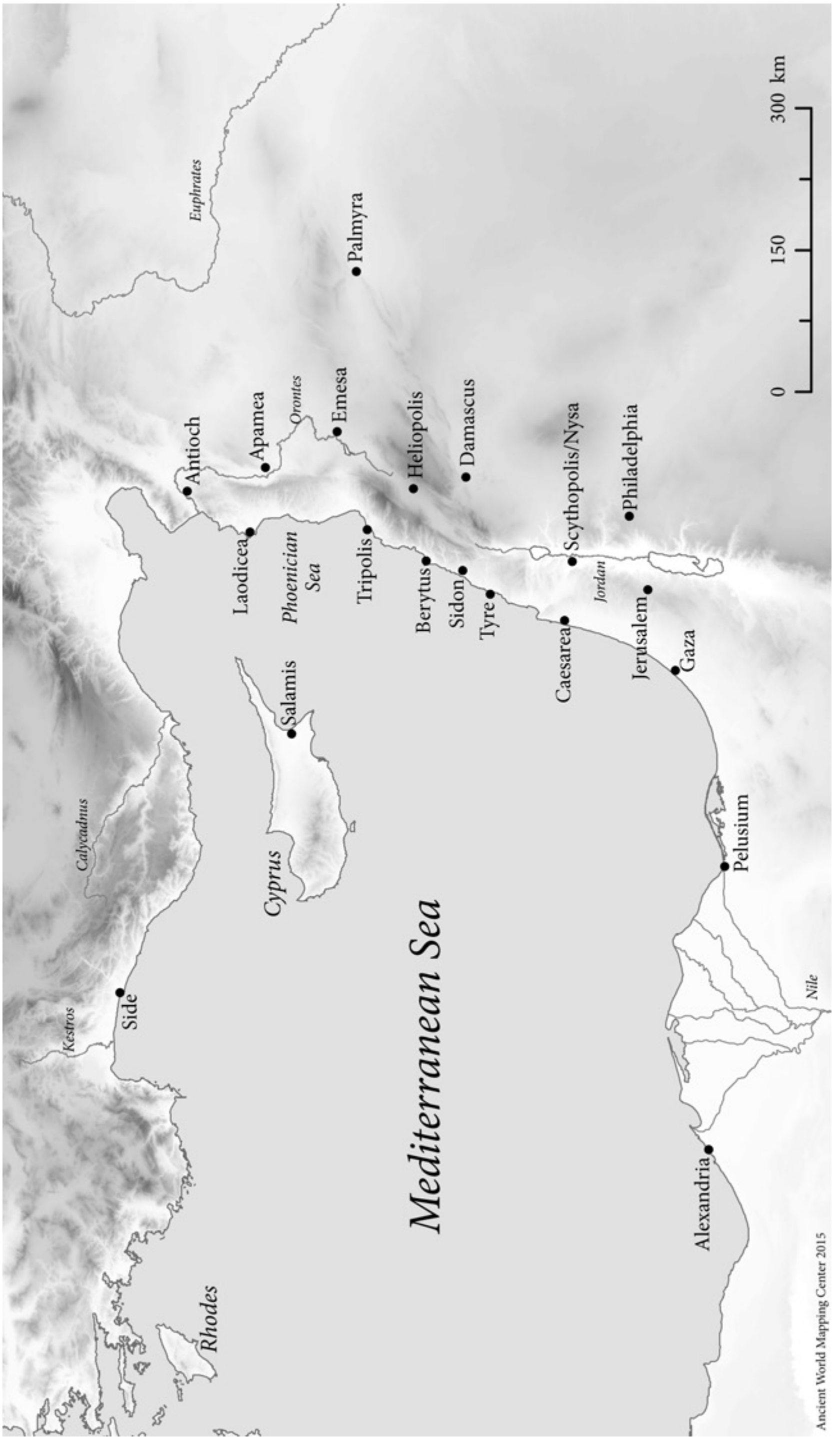


FIGURE 9.1 *The Eastern Mediterranean and Levantine coast in the Early Roman Empire. Highlighting sites in chapter nine.*

governors.[4] Whatever the individual reputation of the emperor, there was a remarkable consistency in imperial responses to appeals from Judaea concerning religious identity. In a study of cases originating in Judaea and coming before the emperor in the mid first century, McKechnie finds that all but one were settled in favor of the Jewish party, and in many instances the decisions of the procurators of Judaea, and even the proconsular governor of Syria, were overturned as a result of Jewish appeals.[5] Given such a track record, it is no surprise that the Jewish elite expected the emperors, with the exception of Gaius, to be favorable to embassies, and a corrective to uncooperative procurators.

While McKechnie's list is based on the reigns of Claudius and Nero, there are earlier incidents that demonstrate that the procurators had to be careful not to offend religious sensibilities. Pilate, for instance, was embroiled with demonstrations because he dedicated shields in Jerusalem to his emperor. This dedication was probably in Herod's old palace, not in the Temple proper, and the shields bore no images. We do not know what the dedicatory inscriptions read—although Fuks suggests that, in order to cause offence, they may have contained the phrase 'to Tiberius son of the divine Augustus."[6] In any event, the gift incited vehement protests on the grounds that it violated Judaic religious law, and ultimately led to the Jews sending a letter of complaint to Tiberius. According to Philo, Tiberius' response was swift and decisive: "Immediately, without even waiting for the next day, he [Tiberius] wrote to Pilate, reproaching him and rebuking him a thousand times for his new-fangled audacity and telling him to remove the shields at once and have them taken from the capital to the coastal city of Caesarea … to be dedicated in the temple of Augustus" (Philo *Leg*. 301–305). After a number of similar complaints, Pilate was removed to Rome to stand trial for misgovernment. Similar stories of offense and redress through imperial corrective can be found in Josephus and Tacitus.

Why should imperial intervention prove a problem? To be sure, an unpopular decision that touched on Jewish religious tradition was quite likely to be contested in Rome, but one could argue that this was a protection against oppressive and irresponsible government, and the procurators were hardly innocent of that. A difficulty was that the scope of Judaic religious law was so wide—and seemed to be widening over the course of the first century, at least in Judaea—that it was likely to conflict with the authority of the procurator. A trivial dispute between Jew and gentile could rapidly escalate into a major

4 We find in Philo, for instance, the text of an injunction regarding Jewish rights that was forwarded by Gaius Norbanus Flaccus to the Ephesians (Philo *Leg*. 311–320).

5 McKechnie (2005) 339–61.

6 See Fuks (1982) 503–7.

ordeal for the procurator, if it was referred to Rome. A major incident could end up implicating a governor in a trial for his career, or even his freedom.

Major incidents were not lacking. A sensational but hardly singular sequence of events occurred in the procuratorship of Cumanus (48–52). On two separate occasions, his soldiers provoked riots among the Jewish population through offensive acts—in one case, a guard at the portico of the Temple, during the feast of Passover, made an obscene gesture to the crowds, who took the act as a blasphemy (*JA* 20.105–112, *BJ* 2.223–4); in another, soldiers sent out on a reprisal after the robbery of an imperial slave on the road to Beth-horon went on a rampage through local villages, during which one soldier found a copy of the "laws of Moses" which he publically rent in two while raving and blaspheming (*JA* 20.113–117; cf. *BJ* 2.229). These acts had dire consequences—public insurrection and widespread fatalities during the riots, in the first instance, and the public beheading of the soldier who had torn up the scriptures, in the second.

Why would such incidents even occur? Aside from the usual frictions between soldiers and subject peoples, there was an additional dimension, which derived from the identity of the soldiers themselves. In the mid first century, the forces at the procurator's disposal would have comprised between three and four thousand auxiliaries enrolled in one cavalry *ala* and five infantry cohorts (*JA* 20.122, *BJ* 2.52).[7] They did not command Roman legions, whose anti-Semitism at this time was no more pronounced than most, nor Jews enlisted from sympathetic elements of the population.[8] Instead, they policed

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7 *Acts* 27.1 mentions a *speira Sebaste* quartered at Caesarea, which was probably one of them. Schürer (1973) 363–5 restores its full title as *cohors Augusta Sebastenorum*; also *Acts* 10:1 affiliates the centurion Cornelius, whom Peter baptized, with an Italian cohort (*speira kaloumene italike*) in Caesarea, perhaps *cohors II Italica civium Romanorum voluntariorum*; Kraeling (1942) 266–7 proposes that it may have arrived in the early 40s; it is attested in Tacitus and in inscriptions from 69.

8 Goodman (1993) 46–7 makes a clear and cogent case for the failure of the Jewish elite (much less the commons) to acquire citizenship through military service. Roth (2007) 410 provides an interesting counterargument; most of his points concern the centuries following the revolt, but he does argue that Rufus, Herod's cavalry commander, could be a Jew with a Roman name instead of a Roman. The decision to recruit Samaritans and Greeks to police the Jewish people may not be exclusively based in the benevolent exemption of Jews from military service, but may also have owed something to the defection of much of the royal army to the rebels on the death of Herod in 4 BCE, except for the contingents from Ceasarea under the command of Rufus and Gratus (*BJ* 2.40, 52). Note also that Herod Agrippa's men abandoned the Roman cohort besieged in Jerusalem in 66. Goodman (1993) 47 notes that "apart from Agrippa I's friend Silas, who was promoted out of personal favour rather than for military services (*AJ* 19.299), later Herodians tended not to use Jewish generals at all." Such Jewish officers as Agrippa II employed "were mostly descendants of the colony of

Judaea with men whose families were ancestral enemies of the Jews. While many provinces included among their auxiliary units recruits from distant lands, the men who served the procurators were enlisted locally—specifically, from Caesarea and Samaria. That is, the soldiers were drawn from the population of Judaea that was most hostile to the Jews: the gentiles of the coast ("Syrians") and the Samaritans. Josephus and others record a long litany of the frictions between Jew and gentile in Caesarea, and those familiar with the New Testament will also know that there was little love lost between Jew and Samaritan. As an illustration, we note Josephus' description (*JA* 19.357–8) of the celebrations of the people of Caesarea and Samaria, many of whom were in military service, at the death of Herod Agrippa I in 44. Josephus alleged that, because of the impropriety of the celebration, Claudius considered transferring the cavalry *ala* and the five infantry cohorts to Pontus, but acquiesced to their petition to remain. It might have been more sensible had he made the transfer, since it should have been readily apparent that maintaining and enforcing the Julio-Claudian policy in this context would be difficult at best. Josephus ended his story (*JA* 19.366–7) with a comment that the auxiliaries "in the period that followed proved to be a source of the greatest disasters to the Jews by sowing the seed of war in [the procurator] Florus' time. For this reason Vespasian, on coming to the throne ... deported them from the province."

The provocations described above were followed by another, which was the murder of a Jewish pilgrim from Galilee at the hands of some Samaritans (*BJ* 2.232–46). According to Josephus, a complaint was made to the procurator, Cumanus, who ignored it. In response, a Jewish mob, led by bandit leaders Eleazar bar Dinaeus and Alexander, made a reprisal against Samaritan towns, burning and killing. At that point Cumanus moved to quell the disturbance, but the insurrection grew beyond the capacity of the four infantry cohorts and the cavalry *ala* available to him (one infantry cohort was presumably left to maintain order in Jerusalem). Quadratus, the governor of Syria, was forced to intervene. Coming before him, the Samaritans claimed that they were not being protected from the Galilean mobs, while the Jews charged Cumanus with favoring the Samaritans over the Galileans. Quadratus agreed to investigate immediately, and his initial findings distributed the blame for the insurrection between both Jews and Samaritans. He first crucified a number of those he found directly implicated (in one version, Josephus gives 18), and later sentenced others (instigators on both sides) to beheading. The less definite cases—that is, those who were implicated in fostering the disturbances

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Babylonian Jews settled in Batanaea by Herod to pacify the area," Goodman (1993) 48, citing *AJ* 17.23–31.

without directly leading them—he brought to Rome in chains, Jew and Samaritan alike. Notably, these included the high priest Ananias and Ananas the superintendent of the Temple. He further directed Cumanus and a military tribune, Celer by name, to explain their conduct before Claudius. In contrast to Quadratus' rational investigation, the hearing in Rome was conducted on the basis of political influence and interest, with Agrippa playing a leading role: the Samaritan prisoners were executed, Cumanus exiled, and Celer sent back to Jerusalem in chains, to be dragged about the city and exposed to the blows and taunts of its populace, and then executed. On a final note, Antonius Felix, who had ties to both the imperial family and the Judaean royal house, replaced the disgraced Cumanus, perhaps at the request of the high priest.[9] As McKechnie puts it in his characteristic understatement: "in view of the progress of the case before it came to Rome, this may appear as an unexpected outcome."[10]

Such punishments are striking. Even the high-ranking governors of Syria had cause to fear. In an extraordinary instance, Vitellius, the proconsular governor of Syria, had already begun to lead a significant army (two legions plus auxiliaries) through Judaea en route to campaign against Aretas, King of Petra, when he was approached by Jewish notables who did not want the images on the standards to pass through Judaea. Incredibly, he agreed to divert his march (*JA* 18.121–2). While Josephus passes over this incident with mild approbation, it is extraordinary that a high-ranking Roman governor would toss out his logistical and tactical plans for the sake of such scruples. But it may be that the higher the status of the official, the more likely he was to avoid confrontation with imperial policy. Syria was a choice province, usually gained at the end of an illustrious career, and men like Vitellius, Petronius, and Quadratus had both the experience in governance and the cosmopolitan inclinations that would allow them to recognize the utility of the Julio-Claudian Jewish policy, or at least the dangers of challenging it.[11]

The limits of religious toleration were clear to neither Roman nor Jew, and restive elements within Judaism seized upon the opportunity to reassert or invent traditions to undermine Roman influence. The authority of the Roman

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9 Smallwood (1981) 266–7.

10 McKechnie (2005) 348.

11 Philo (*Leg.* 245) claimed that Petronius had even studied Jewish philosophy and piety as a means to understanding the many Jews living in his province. He would not have been typical. Petronius was also the central figure in a notable inversion of the pattern of imperial toleration in opposition to local administration. Caught between Caligula's provocative insistence that his statue be placed within the Temple at Jerusalem, and desperate please from the Jews, Petronius upheld the traditional Julio-Claudian policy.

governor was compromised through his ignorance of local custom and Judaic law.[12] It was further undermined by his agents, for not only were the forces available to him too small to effectively police Palestine, but their character discouraged harmony. Imperial intervention in response to complaints about prefects and procurators may have been seen as a corrective to mismanagement (which had been disastrous in Pannonia and Dalmatia), but resulted in insecurity and hostility.

The Julio-Claudian "hearts-and-minds" doctrine ultimately failed in Palestine, but only after a half century of relative peace, maintained despite numerous crises, many of which were inflamed by religious conflict. It is perhaps fitting that the inception of the revolt was marked by a ritual act—more accurately, by the failure to perform a ritual act: in the summer of 66, Eleazar, son of Ananias the High Priest, persuaded those who officiated at the Temple to abandon the customary offering for Rome and its emperor (*BJ* 2.409).

The Nature of the Jewish Insurgency and the Military Campaign, 66–70

Terror

Jewish resistance abruptly changed in nature in 66. Previously there was a broad spectrum of expressions of dissatisfaction with Roman rule, among them peaceful demonstrations, embassies to imperial authorities, economic and social boycotts, public mockery, riots, and banditry. But the violence exploded in scale and intensity, as massacres savaged the cities of mixed Jewish-gentile populations on the margins of Palestine. The massacres seem to have risen not from a plan, but as a hysterical reaction, spontaneous in the moment but predicated on a long history of antipathy.

Revolutionary terror was ignited at Masada, when a band of Jews took the fort by stratagem and slaughtered the garrison. Josephus then reports

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12 According to Josephus, Pilate deliberately provoked the Jews by bringing in an auxiliary cohort, complete with standards bearing the emperor's portrait, into Jerusalem. It is difficult to determine whether Pilate's culpability was due to ignorance or intent (and what he would have gained from the latter is not terribly clear), although most scholarly work leans towards ignorance, and places the event in 26, at the beginning of Pilate's tenure. In the end, Pilate backed down in the face of a remarkable demonstration of passive resistance, and withdrew the unit to Caesarea (*BJ* 2.169–74, *JA* 18.55–59, with the additional note that "the procurators of earlier times made their entry into the city only with standards lacking such ornaments").

(*BJ* 2.450–456) that the faction of Eleazar, son of the high priest Ananias, murdered the Roman garrison of Jerusalem, which had surrendered and exchanged oaths, sparing only Metilius, its commander, after forcibly circumcising him. Josephus equated this event in time and nature with the beginning of the general conflagration, when the Jews of Caesarea were massacred. The wildfire spread as Jews killed gentiles in a ring of "Syrian" cities about Palestine, and gentiles killed Jews in Scythopolis, Ascalon, and Ptolemais (*BJ* 2.457–483).

This was by no means the first rebellion against Rome that began with a general slaughter. But in most cases the victims had been Italians, or those collaborating with Roman rule. In Palestine in 66, Jewish xenophobia vented its rage on many peoples, in part to define its identity in opposition to the cosmopolitanism as well as the power of the Roman Empire. The net result of this was a hardening of ethnic and geographic boundaries. Foreigners and foreign ways were to be purged. In essence, the nation-state of "Israel," identified on coins issued during the revolt, had no place for gentiles.[13]

However, the Jews too were divided. The pogrom of violence between ethnic groups released by the rebellion had a counterpart within the factions afflicting the Jewish people. Much of the efforts of these factions was directed at subverting, intimidating, exploiting, pillaging, or murdering each other.

Beth-horon

It fell to C. Cestius Gallus, legate of Syria, and Herod Agrippa II, who remained loyal to Rome, to respond to the rebellion. Agrippa immediately sent two thousand royal cavalry to Jerusalem, to reinforce the Roman garrison there (*BJ* 2.421). Cestius' response was delayed and cautious—and his hesitation may have owed as much to foreign and domestic political dangers as to his need to assess the rebellion and decide the appropriate actions.[14] According to Josephus' narrative, it was only after the murder by treachery of the Romans besieged in Jerusalem, followed immediately by horrific massacres, that Cestius left Antioch.[15] He had gathered a considerable force and followed more

13 Cf. McLaren (1991) 133; Curran (2005) 94.

14 Goldsworthy (1996) 88–9 notes the tendency of the Romans to respond immediately to a revolt with whatever force they can muster on the spot. This was certainly not the case here, and it does not seem that Cestius was simply trying to balance celerity with logistical necessity, since his commissioning of Neapolitanus to investigate matters suggests that he was deliberating whether force was in fact necessary. Mason's (2011) 210–12 analysis of the possible influences on Cestius' timing and intentions is intriguing, and helpful, as is that of Curran (2007) 79–80.

15 Roth (1991) 403 n. 13 tentatively dates the massacre of the garrison to the end of August, and Cestius' arrival to mid-October.

or less the same route and method as Varus half a century earlier, in similar circumstances (*BJ* 2.499).[16] En route, he sent out contingents to burn and kill, as a demonstration of Roman power.

Whether he planned to besiege or storm Jerusalem, or merely make a show of force and re-establish his relationship with the Jewish elites, on whom he thought he could depend, is a matter of some contention.[17] Whatever his goal, he was unable to attain it. His force survived an initial ambush, but with the loss of men and much of the baggage train. After regrouping and pushing through, Cestius was unable to subvert, intimidate, or take Jerusalem. When he attempted to withdraw northward, he was again ambushed by Jewish irregulars. His men were severely mauled, and the *legio XII Fulminata* surpassed its recent disgrace in the war against Parthia by losing its eagle (Suet. *Vesp*. 4.5).[18]

The intent and command of the Jewish force is obscure. The first ambush appears to be meant to harass the Roman march on Jerusalem, not prevent it. While there are problems identifying topography compatible with Josephus' description, it is evident that the Jews were not seeking open battle, but wisely chose to exploit difficult terrain. Their object in pursuing Cestius is uncertain, since he no longer represented an immediate threat to Jerusalem. Perhaps the Jews sensed weakness and poor morale in their enemies, or desired revenge for Cestius' brutality on his southward march, or really did feel inspired by divine sanction. It is doubtful that their initial plans would have aspired to the destruction of Cestius' force; on the other hand, if the rout was as disastrous as Josephus portrayed it, it is curious that they did not continue the pursuit and attempt a yet more decisive victory. Perhaps their intent from the start was to hurt, or better yet, humiliate the Romans, while implicating the general population and the elites in the rebellion. Their boldness paid off beyond rational expectation, and must have been a great boost in morale and legitimacy for the rebellion.

Josephus named a handful of Jews fighting in the battle, noting their prominence, but not their roles. Although scholars have equated prominence with leadership, this assumption rests on insecure foundations. Josephus said

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16 For Varus' campaign, see *BJ* 2.39–79; Isaac (1990) 56–7; Smallwood (1981) 112–3. As always, I am skeptical about Josephus' numbers (which have all too often been received without serious reservation). Vexillations of two thousand, for instance, are rather large, although Roth (1991) 127, 403–4 and others accept the numbers here.

17 Mason (2011) 213–9 discusses a number of modern interpretations, and concludes with a persuasive argument that Cestius expected to be received into Jerusalem by a sympathetic faction, as Varus had been.

18 Smallwood (1981) 298.

that "the most noble (*gennaiotatoi*) of them seemed to be Monobazos and Kenedaios, kin of King Monobaz [II] of Adiabene, and after them Niger of Peraea and Silas the Babylonian who had deserted to the Jews from the army of King Agrippa [II]" (*BJ* 2.520). Are we to assume that these four men commanded the frontal attack? We can infer that only from the sequence of the sentences, since they are mentioned between the accounting of the dead and the withdrawal of the attack on the front. Simon b. Giora attacked the rear of the Roman column, presumably as the commander of another force (*BJ* 2.521). Eleazar b. Simon profited from the victory by seizing and retaining the Roman spoils, leading some to speculate that he also led a contingent in the battles (*BJ* 2.564). Yet none of these men were given commands of districts by the ruling council, and the assumption has been that their service in the only successful battle of the war was worth less than the influence of their social betters.[19]

Also remarkable, and surprisingly not generally remarked, is the presence of two nobles from Adiabene, which at this time was a client kingdom of Parthia. Why were they here? In the speech condemning the revolt that Josephus crafted for Agrippa II, that king warned his countrymen that they should expect no help from the Jews of Mesopotamia—he specifically mentioned Adiabene—and even should help be proffered, the Parthians would never permit it (*BJ* 2.16.4).

Parthia (and hence Adiabene) and Rome had just negotiated a peace after a conflict over Armenia, but relations were uneasy.[20] Josephus (and Curran, following him) thought that the Parthians would not allow a client to disrupt relations. There are reasons to support this notion: the Parthian King Vologaeses, in 70, offered forty thousand troops to assist Vespasian to suppress the revolt; and after the Roman victory, Titus traveled to Zeugma on the Euphrates to meet Vologaeses and receive a golden crown (Tacitus *Hist.* 4.51.1–2; Suet. *Vesp.* 6; *BJ* 7.105).[21] However, this assistance was offered long after the Romans needed help, and one could imagine Vespasian's thoughts on the prospect of four myriads of Parthian "allies" in Palestine. More likely these were conciliatory gestures, perhaps because there was cause for suspicion. Not long after, the Parthians exploited a popular belief that Nero had fled to the east and yet lived, and thereby undermined the stability of the region.[22]

19 Goodman (1993) 166. According to Josephus (*BJ* 2.566), Niger had been archon of Idumaea, but was demoted when the assignments were made, and set under two new *archontes* of his former territory.

20 Neusner (1964) 63.

21 See also Curran (2007) 81.

22 Kooten (2011) 420–2.

Were the Parthians backing the insurgency through clients? Certainly a Jewish revolt was likely to hurt Roman interests, weaken Syria, and divert attention from Armenia. A tacit and deniable support via a client kingdom offered a low-risk opportunity for Parthia. Why, on the other hand, would King Monobaz II be willing to send his kin to Jerusalem to join the revolt? He or they may have been motivated by religious sympathy with the Jews as well as antipathy toward Rome. The ruling family of Adiabene had converted to Judaism, and its population included a strong component of diaspora Jews. The royal house had a cordial relationship with Judaea, having made generous donations to the Temple (*JA* 20.2.1–4).[23] Furthermore, Tigranes VI, Rome's former client king of Armenia, had invaded Adiabene in 61, and briefly deposed Monobaz, thereby triggering the war between Parthia and Rome.

The point of the digression is that there was potential for Parthia to back the Jewish revolt indirectly. Any realization of that potential is impossible to identify, and it may have been limited to allowing men and arms to flow from within its area of influence into Palestine. A number of men from Adiabene fought alongside the Jews throughout the revolt, for another is mentioned by name at the siege of Jerusalem (*BJ* 5.11.5); whether these joined for their own private reasons, or in response to state encouragement, is indeterminable. Whatever the scale and nature, it is likely that the Romans would be afraid of Parthian intervention; certainly Vespasian had thought it necessary to send emissaries to Parthia and Armenia in 69 to be sure of his eastern flank, before leaving to begin his ascent to the purple (Tacitus *Hist*. 2.82.5).

What had the Jews accomplished in the opening phases of the rebellion? Quite a bit: morale must have been high (whatever the nagging doubts of the historically minded), and the rebellion could have used the time to attempt a transition to a coherent and legitimate state.

Ascalon

As Agrippa had warned, no serious external assistance to the revolt materialized, and the Jewish elites sought to dominate the movement for ends that looked more to their own future with the Romans than a wide base of support. After the victory at Beth-horon, the elites agreed on commanders (*strategoi*) to conduct the war. Joseph b. Gorion and Ananus b. Ananus (formerly High Priest) claimed supreme command of affairs in Jerusalem; six other regional commanders were selected (*BJ* 2.562–582, 647–651; *Vita* 28–29).[24] The popular

23 Neusner (1964) 62.

24 The districts were: Idumaea; Jericho; Peraea; Thamna; Gophna and Acrabetta; the Galilees and Gamala.

Simon b. Giora, who had figured prominently at Beth-horon, was not among them. We can infer from subsequent difficulties, and especially those faced by Josephus in Galilee, that the appointments were not always readily recognized by the peoples who were to be governed. Furthermore, the men selected, as was typical of the Jewish elites, did not have significant experience as military leaders.

From this point, the posture of the rebels was essentially defensive. The exception was an attack on Ascalon towards the end of 66 (*BJ* 3.9–26).[25] This effort was commanded not by the district commanders, but by their more experienced inferiors: John the Essene, Silas the Babylonian, and Niger the Peraean. They led three separate forces on three separate axes of attack, which were coordinated ably enough that the Romans did not engage them piecemeal. The division may arise from distinct groups of men following charismatic leaders rather than from tactics, although logistical concerns may have precluded a large initial concentration. Again, we are left with Josephus' (often exaggerated) numbers, which account for eighteen thousand Jewish dead, plus some survivors.

Why attack Ascalon? According to Philo (*Leg*. 205), between gentile and Jew at Ascalon, "there is an irreconcilable and never-ending hostility," but certainly that was hardly extraordinary in 66. The city was both vulnerable and a potential danger. It was vulnerable, because its garrison was small: a single auxiliary cohort of infantry and an *ile* of cavalry. On the other hand, it represented a potential danger, since the force was large enough to raid from the security of its base, and could be reinforced by sea or by units drawn from Egypt. Ascalon was uncomfortably located in the rear as the Jews looked north to another invasion from Syria.

Antonius, the Roman commanding Ascalon's defense, wielded his experienced force to superb effect. His cavalry devastated the Jewish attackers on the open plain. Two of the three Jewish leaders perished, while Niger took temporary refuge in a fort, then caves (like a bandit leader), and ultimately escaped back to Jerusalem. The battles about Ascalon demonstrated that the rebellion could not field an effective army.[26] Thus the Jewish offensive ceased, and initiative passed to the Romans. Preparations were underway for a defensive war, with Jerusalem sheltered not only by its walls, but also by a forward defense, offering resistance in fortified strongpoints, which served as refuges and bases for continuing the insurgency in the countryside.

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25 Bloom (2010) 85–7; Freyne (2002) 50–1; Roth (1991) 412–15.

26 Goldsworthy (1998) 89–90.

The Bandit War (lestrikos polemos)

If conventional war was out of the question, was a large-scale insurgency still possible? Simply put, it already existed. Parts of Palestine (Galilee is particularly well attested) had been in an almost perpetual state of banditry (*lesteia*) for the last century.[27] This had been of some concern to the Romans, but we can infer from the small scale of their military commitment that they had not seen it as a serious danger.[28]

In years past, there had been an aura of political resistance to the bandits (*lestai*), at least as interpreted by Josephus. Hasmonaean rivals undermined each other's and Roman interests with bandit gangs.[29] Herod was also embroiled in the unrest, both for his own security, and because of his obligation, as a good client ruler, to subdue the *lestai* on his northern border (*JA* 14.159, *BJ* 1.204).[30] Josephus used the term *lestai* for those who tried to resist Herod's usurpation of Hasmonean rule in Galilee (and the verb *neoterizo*, or revolt, to characterize their resistance), as a way to delegitimize them and their cause. While the scale of the conflicts was not immense, neither was it trivial—Josephus claimed that Herod's army, when mustered against the *lestai* in the caves at Arbela, numbered two thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry; he did not specify the number of *lestai*, but they were strong enough to offer serious resistance in a hard-fought conflict, which was told with the literary conventions of set-piece battle (*BJ* 1.304–6).[31] Furthermore, Josephus noted that the *lestai* were experienced in war, as opposed to merely brigandage (*BJ* 1.305).[32]

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27 Crossan (1991) 171–3. Mason (2011) 169 sensibly observes that we cannot say whether Galilee was more or less ridden with bandits than other districts, merely that Josephus concentrated his attention on Galilee and its bandits.

28 Pompey had made some effort to destroy the mountain strongholds of bandits in Lebanon when he was intervening in the affairs of the region more than a century earlier, although the magnitude was far less significant and the results far less spectacular than his campaign against the pirates of the Mediterranean. See Isaac (1984) 175. See also Fuhrmann (2012) for a comprehensive treatment on policing the Roman Empire.

29 Isaac (1984) 176, and n. 23, citing *JA* 14.43.

30 Isaac (1984) 176; Loftus (1977) 82–3. Herod was further entrusted with territory by Augustus to suppress the *lestai* plaguing Damascus (*BJ* 1.398–400; Isaac (1984) 178).

31 I am not convinced by Crossan's interpretation of this conflict. He proposes (1991) 177 that Josephus has conflated two campaigns. Herod embarks on two separate operations against two separate enemies: a conventional battle against conventional soldiers, and unconventional and smaller-scale operations against the *lestai* in the caves. The passage of Josephus does not support this distinction. Cf. also Freyne (1980) 58.

32 Literally: "having, on the one hand, martial experience, on the other, a brigand-like daring."

Herod's defeat and slaughter of these men was said to remove fear and destruction from the area, save for the threat posed by the survivors who holed up in caves (*BJ* 1.306–307). From this point, Josephus departed the conventional rhetoric of battle for the unconventional—a succession of bitter, small-scale, tactical actions in difficult terrain to suppress an insurgency. Josephus noted that the resistance endured—at least for the winter and subsequent spring—and Herod felt the need to return for a hazardous and protracted series of tactical operations, lowering his men on ropes into the caves for desperate fights at close quarters. Josephus waxed eloquent on the ferocity of the defenders, who preferred to murder their families and commit suicide to accepting terms (*BJ* 1.312–13).[33] In the end, Herod left their corpses strewn in the valleys below the caves, and delegated command of the area to his general Ptolemy. But the moment he left, a general revolt occurred, surprising and killing Ptolemy, and distracting Herod from his plan to confront Antigonus directly (*BJ* 1.316). Even after Herod's reprisal, a solution was unattainable. Herod's supporters among the nobility met untimely deaths by drowning, and we learn of yet another revolt in response to news of the death of Herod's brother Joseph (*BJ* 1.324–26).

If we were to take Josephus' terminology seriously, this persistent resistance to Herod was an example of a powerful and partially successful insurrection (*lesteia*) ultimately defined by the borders of political and social faction.[34] But is this characterization fair? As a Hasmonean, descended from kings, and once favored by Rome, Antigonus was hardly what we might picture as a bandit chieftain. Were the *lestai* of regions like Galilee politically and socially motivated, and capable of a more broadly based insurrection in the 60s?

Part of the difficulty in discussing the nature of the rural insurgency is the ambiguity inherent in the Greek word often translated as "bandit," *lestes* (pl. *lestai*). According to Isaac, "the term 'bandit' could be applied to anyone who used force to attain his ends, whether they were part of the imperial establishment or belonged to its enemies."[35] This definition is a start, but rather general. More specifically, Josephus characterized independent armed groups as *lestai*, and attributed their motives to a desire for lawlessness, perhaps because of his own political sympathies, which tended to oppose their social

33 See also Loftus (1977) 84.

34 It is not incidental, for instance, that pro-Herodian elites remained the targets of the *lestai*. See also Freyne (1988) 58; qualified by Crossan (1991) 177–8, who argues that they are a political (Hasmonean) rather than social force.

35 Isaac (1984) 183.

base and goals.[36] *Lestai* in Judaea included bands of people who were thieves and thugs, or who were rebelling against economic oppression, or who were rebelling against political oppression from within or without the state, or some combination of the three.[37]

Horsley drew upon the classic work on social banditry by Hobsbawm to characterize the *lestai* in Galilee as a form of resistance.[38] In essence, his argument is that Galilean peasants resisted economic and social oppression by behavior that their oppressors consider lawless.[39] It certainly can be argued that many of the *lestai* involved in the Jewish revolt were of peasant origin. Goodman speaks at some length about the difficult economic conditions borne by the small farmers of Judaea, and argues that *lestai* were formerly free peasants, driven to brigandage by taxation and economic hardship.[40] On the other hand, we should not posit that the foreclosed farmer was the only, or even the principle, archetype of the *lestes*.[41] Nor does it follow that the Galilean *lesteia* was a collective rebellion against Rome and its clients.

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36 Indeed, so flexible is Josephus' use of the term *lestai* that one wonders if its semantic content is negligible, or if it serves only as a term of disparagement, Goodman (1993) 199. See Shaw (1984) 23 regarding Roman attitudes: "… the label *latro* was available to be pasted on any 'de-stated' person. It became a powerful metaphor in itself, used deliberately to cast doubt on hostile persons, principally political enemies." Cf. also Shaw (1984) 33, on the label "pirate" applied to Sextus Pompeius (*RG* 25.1).

37 These are general distinctions, but are more useful in this particular discussion than the more refined and specific versions of bandits identified by Shaw (1984) 7.

38 Horsley (1986) 166–8, citing Hobsbawm (1969) esp. 22–4.

39 Hobsbawm (1969) 17: "The point about social bandits is that they are peasant outlaws whom the lord and state regard as criminals, but who remain within peasant society, and are considered by their people as heroes, as champions, avengers, fighters for justice, perhaps even leaders of liberation, and in any case as men to be admired, helped and supported. This relation between the ordinary peasant and the rebel, outlaw and robber is what makes social banditry interesting and significant."

40 Goodman (1993) 60–4. His argument is based on analysis of Jewish customs for handling debt and land inheritance, and also on inferences from Josephus. For instance, during the crisis caused by Caligula's orders to install a statue of himself in the Jewish Temple, a great crowd of Jews journeyed to petition Petronius, governor of Syria, and remained in his presence when their initial appeals were not approved. On seeing this, Jewish leaders warned Petronius that "since the land was unsown, there would be a harvest of banditry because the requirements of tribute could not be met," clarifying the connection between agricultural failure and *lesteia* (*JA* 18.274). See also Isaac (1984) 179 and n. 41.

41 Cf. Hobsbawm (1969) 28, where he also notes that bandit units are unlikely to contain married men with children. Interestingly, the *lestai* resisting Herod in 37 are associated with their families in caves—witness the dramatic example of the father who murders his

While Hobsbawm admitted a range of models for social bandits—the noble robber, the primitive resistance fighter, and the avenger or terrorist—all of which enact popular protest in different ways,[42] his idealistic notions are problematized by Blok and, following him, Crossan.[43] Blok uses research done on Sicilian material to demonstrate that class conflict has received undue emphasis in Hobsbawm's model. Bandits often victimize those from whose ranks they have emerged, and may even be coopted by those they are claiming to resist. They suppress peasants directly through violence and intimidation, and indirectly by weakening class solidarity, since brigandage provides a ladder to ascend the social hierarchy.[44]

It would hardly be fair to say that the *lesteia* in Galilee was an insurgency on behalf of freedom for the Jewish people. But it could reasonably be said that the *lestai*, for a spectrum of reasons, including self-interest, stiffened the resistance of communities to Rome, intimidated pro-Roman minorities, and undermined Roman authority. Certainly Vespasian saw the banditry in Palestine as intrinsic to the insurgency. With his march south into Galilee, Vespasian would move the problem from the scope of local policing to that of a large-scale military counterinsurgency operation.

Thus, given their situation in 66, and given the tactics used by the *lestai*, it is reasonable to propose that the Jewish leadership considered the advantages of coordinating their strategy against the Romans with the *lestai* of Palestine. Certainly we see Josephus enrolling *lestai* as mercenaries—if we are to believe his numbers, they represented a considerable force of 4500 (*Vita* 14.77–78; *BJ* 2.581). Such efforts, however, were complicated by a number of factors: (1) the *lestai* were often in competition with each other, and were not popular all areas of Galilee. It may be true that in general they received popular support (and Isaac's example of the *lestes* Barrabas is a sound, if early, case),[45] but that support was often localized; (2) if the social identifications of Horsley and Goodman are correct, then the *lestai* may not have much sympathy towards the elite Jews who approached them to fight on their behalf; and (3) despite Shaw's

family before committing suicide (*BJ* 1. 312–313). On the other hand, Isaac (1984) 177, 182–3 has shown that "Rabbinical sources … regularly describe representatives of the Roman government as bandits (*listim*)." This is particularly true of tax collectors and customs officials. The pejorative label seems to convey the illicit and illegitimate nature of Roman governance, especially with respect to the seizure of money.

42 Hobsbawm (1969) 20.

43 Blok (1972) 495–7; Crossan (1991) 169–70.

44 Blok (1972) 496.

45 Blok (1972) 179–80, citing Mark 15.7; See also Luke 23.18–19; John 18.40.

assertion, the *lestai* were not all inclined to resist Rome, or at least, to resist pro-Roman Jewish factions. We find, for instance, the bandit-chief (*archilestes*) Jesus hired by the pro-Roman city of Sepphoris to kill Josephus (*Vita* 22).

While Josephus described the Jewish resistance as tactically aggressive (e.g., surprising the Romans with bold sallies), it was strategically defensive—even passive, after the success at Beth horon and the abortive assault on Ascalon early in the war. Once Vespasian's force moved south from Syria, the Jews either could not or chose not to muster a field army to engage it. Instead, they dispersed their forces in pockets behind fortification walls, and watched while they were reduced one by one. In effect, they had ceded the initiative and, with it the war.

The Deracination Policy of the Flavians

Vespasian's Campaign

If all the world is a stage, the Roman Emperor sat in the imperial box overlooking it, and Vespasian must have been keenly aware of it. His plans, therefore, needed to be appropriate not only—perhaps not even primarily—to the situation in Judaea, but also to the situation in Rome. That was decidedly in flux when he took command. It is perhaps otiose, but necessary for all that, to recall that the Jewish revolt was both an opportunity and a danger for Vespasian. Generals could be too successful for their own good, as the unhappy fate of Corbulo had recently proved. On the other hand, it would seem that at the time of his appointment to suppress the revolt, Vespasian's career needed restarting. It would take a rather imaginative prophet to envision his ultimate apotheosis.

In February of 67, Nero assigned to Vespasian three legions as the core of his force.[46] These were the *legio v Macedonica*, commanded by Sex. Vettulenus Cerialis; *legio x Fretensis*, commanded by M. Ulpius Traianus, and *legio xv Apollinaris*, commanded for the most part by Vespasian's son Titus. *Legio xv* was in Alexandria when the revolt began, so Titus was sent to collect it. Later in the conflict, a reconstituted *legio xii Fulminata* joined the army at the siege of Jerusalem. For sound political reasons, Titus took over the command of the campaign when his father left to pursue the purple in 69, at which time Vespasian entrusted him to the experienced Tiberius Julius Alexander, who

46 Herein I am following Josephus (*BJ* 3.64–69) and Roth (1991) 416–19, rather than Suetonius (*Vesp*. 4.5–6).

had been procurator of Judaea from 46 to 48.[47] In addition to these legions, Vespasian commanded ten 1000 man infantry cohorts (*cohortes miliariae*), thirteen mixed cohorts, each of 600 infantry and 120 cavalry (*cohortes equitatae quingenariae*), and six cavalry wings (*alae*, either *quingenariae* or *miliariae*). Substantial contingents of allied troops contributed another eight thousand foot (mostly archers) and four thousand cavalry (*BJ* 3.4.2). Even allowing for exaggeration, this is an impressive field army, well balanced and flexible.[48]

Vespasian first set about securing his logistical bases and lines of communications, thereby also providing some protection for the gentile population in the coastal cities, and to the ascendant pro-Roman faction in Sepphoris. Although the Romans raided from their bases at times, the object of those raids was to terrorize the populace rather than to forage for food—and in any event, it would be nigh impossible to sustain such a large force in Palestine through foraging for any length of time. Much of the requisite grain supply would have been imported by sea into the excellent port of Caesarea, which had served as the headquarters for the Roman administration in years previous (and continued to do so during the war), and housed legions during the winter months.[49] Some supplies would have been available from Syria and the Decapolis.[50]

The capture of Jerusalem, the heart of the revolt, was the ultimate aim of Vespasian's deployment, even as it had been for Varus and Cestius.[51] But Vespasian's movements along the path to that end were less direct. Like Cestius, he entered the zone of conflict via the coastal areas (in which lived substantial numbers of gentiles who saw in Rome protection from the violence of the rebellion), passing through Tyre and Ptolemais on his way south. Vespasian linked up with Titus and *legio XV* at Ptolemais, and proceeded to advance into Galilee by sending a large force to the friendly city of Sepphoris. Thence he began a summer campaign, in which he laid waste to the countryside and captured the strongholds and cities that defied him. By August, with the fortified city of Jotapata taken, the situation seemed to be stabilized, and Vespasian stood down his legions.[52] Renewed outbreaks in Agrippa's posses-

47 See Jones (1989) 127–34 for an analysis of Titus' performance as commander.

48 For a reconstructed roster, see Roth (1991) 418, Table X.

49 See Roth (1999) 175 for logistical considerations for the choice of Caesarea.

50 For logistic connections to Syria, see Roth (1999) 266. The presence of *XV Apollinaris* at Scythopolis served a strategic purpose, controlling the route down the Jordan River valley from Galilee, but it is also probable that the valley had sufficient resources to sustain it over the winter.

51 Cf. Bloom (2010) 118.

52 Moving one's legions into winter quarters in mid-June, in the middle of a campaigning season, requires some explanation—Roth (1991) 423–5 proposes that the delay was

sions in eastern Galilee (esp. Tiberias, Tarichaeae, and Gamala) brought the Romans into heavy fighting until late in the fall, when the last holdouts in Galilee (ending with Gischala) were secured. During the same campaigning season, *legio V* under Cerialis destroyed the Samaritan stronghold on their holy mountain, Mount Gerizim, where once their Temple had stood. An expeditionary force of infantry and cavalry destroyed the nest of pirates at Joppa that was threatening the shipments of grain carried along the coast (*BJ* 3.414–417).[53]

The revolt had been contained by the end of 67. To the north, Vespasian held the cities of Galilee; to the northeast his faithful client Agrippa blocked access to the diaspora Jews of Mesopotamia, as did the Arabs and the cities of the Decapolis to the east. During the winter of 68, Vespasian made a sudden incursion into Peraea, possibly as a blocking move to ward off the possibility of Parthian intervention (*BJ* 4.413–415). Alexandria was under control, the Jewish population there quiescent for the moment. There was no longer hope for aid to the rebels from Parthia or other foreign powers; there would be no aid from the diaspora Jews.[54]

At this point Vespasian had the option of continuing the gradual reduction of the revolt, or attempting a knock-out blow against Jerusalem. He chose the former. Josephus (*BJ* 4.366–76) maintained that he was well informed of the sedition within Jerusalem, and that he chose to let it run its course rather than risk uniting the Jews against him. However, Josephus later declared (*BJ* 4.444–49) that Vespasian decided to make a quick end of the war when he heard

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caused by logistical needs, and that Vespasian resumed operations late in July or early in August.

53 Cestius had targeted Joppa on his campaign as well, even though it was distant from his line of march. Culham (unpublished MS) proposes that the piracy was an intrinsic element of the insurgency, but Roth (1991) 424–25, and n. 71 argues that the *lesteia* preceded the war.

54 Vespasian constructed a diplomatic and military barrier about Judaea. This had the double effect of preventing help, and also preventing the insurgents from withdrawing to bases in territory removed from Roman reprisals. Such had been the dilemma faced by Herod when he was trying to suppress the revolt in Trachonitis in 9 BCE.—he had been unable to pursue those who withdrew into Nabataean territory. This led to conflict between Herod and the Arabs, since Herod was unable to quell resistance without crossing into Nabataean territory. See the comments of Isaac (1984) 178, citing *JA* 15.342–8, *BJ* 1.398–400 and Bloom (2010) 39–40. Agrippa II was a great help to Vespasian in isolating the insurgency. In protecting his realm, and patrolling his borders, he prevented the spread of the rebellion. For instance, Agrippa sent troops under his prefect Sulla to hold Bethsaida Julias, thereby cutting off the roads to Galilean territory (*Vita* 398–402).

of the revolt of Vindex in Gaul that winter (68).[55] A definitive interpretation is difficult. Vespasian's initial moves—Jamnia, Lydda, Emmaus—indicate a threat to Jerusalem, but whether his subsequent movements to the northeast, and thence to Jericho, suggest a feint towards Jerusalem or a change of mind is not clear.[56] Certainly the reference to garrisons, installed during the winter under Roman commanders (decurions for villages, centurions for cities), and in Judaea and Peraea with Jewish deserters, indicated an encirclement of the last center of resistance which, by mid-summer, was effectively isolated (*BJ* 4.490). The heart of the rebellion beat only in crowded, volatile, and ultimately doomed Jerusalem.

Nero's suicide now postponed, if briefly, the climax (*BJ* 4.491). The offensive ground to a halt in the middle of the campaigning season, and the initiative could well have passed to the insurgents. Titus (as proxy for Vespasian) and Agrippa II departed for Rome, since formal recognition of the power of the new emperor was of paramount importance. Meanwhile, Simon bar Giora had been waxing powerful in the hill country of Judaea. Simon, one of the Jewish commanders against Cestius, although excluded by the elites, struck out on his own, developing a considerable power base and following. Rather than confront the Romans, however, he preyed upon his fellow countrymen. His rise to prominence inspired fear rather than hope in Jerusalem, and that fear was realized when he entered the city to become embroiled in its deadly faction fights, ultimately claiming a monarchy. The rebellious Jews and the Romans had something in common: their domestic problems seriously impeded their ability to develop a coherent strategy, much less carry it out. But the Roman civil wars, though deadly, did not cause divisions in the east, so they provided not a release but a respite from danger for the Jews. As Josephus bewailed, they used the respite to slaughter each other.

A year after Nero's death, in the summer of 69, the Romans renewed the offensive, further tightening the noose around Jerusalem with operations in Judaea and northern Idumaea.[57] But in autumn of 69, there was another hiatus, as Vespasian began his political and military campaign for emperor. His success removed him from further involvement in the war. Its completion—essentially contained in the capture of Jerusalem—was left to Titus. While dramatic—perhaps melodramatic would be a better adjective—the siege of Jerusalem offers little for the student of counterinsurgency. Titus had a con-

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55 See Isaac (1990) 54–55.

56 Alternately, these moves, made at the time of harvest, may have been intended to secure immediate and future logistical needs (Roth 1991) 431.

57 There are problems with Josephus' chronology—see Roth (1991) 434–6.

ventional, if difficult, task, which he handled conventionally and successfully.[58] Likewise, the capture of the Herodion, Machaerus, and Masada were handled with the customary professionalism of the Roman army.

Scorched Earth and Slaughter

Vespasian's campaign was stained with blood and ashes. While cities endured after Roman capture, great numbers of their inhabitants were lost to massacre, enslavement, and expulsion. Villages and towns in restive areas were often obliterated.[59] This process seems not only horrific to the modern reader, but also counterproductive.[60] One would imagine that survivors, escaping from the ruins, would be inclined and impelled by necessity to become brigands, and concentrate their efforts in resistance to Rome.[61] In effect, this did occur, as refugees from Galilee—whom Josephus called *lestai*, and thence zealots—swelled the population of Jerusalem, radicalized the revolt, and prevented negotiation with Rome. So why did the Romans not attempt to win over the population through a "hearts-and-minds" campaign, since, according to modern counterinsurgency theory, the obedience, if not the support, of the population is the necessary pre-condition to the state's victory?[62]

Shaw argues that the Romans were quite aware that *latrocinium* was a phenomenon sustained by social support (whether popular or elite), and further states that Roman law "assumes that bandits cannot operate without a broader network of supporters, and that the governor cannot put an end to their actions without striking at this base."[63] In Galilee, Vespasian chose to remove the support for the insurgency through swift and violent eradication rather

58 Although it figures large in Josephus' account, Roth (1991) 444 notes that the siege, of four months duration, was not particularly long by ancient standards.

59 Goodman (1993) 179 and n. 46 with examples.

60 See, for instance, Joes (2004) 158–60.

61 Horsley (1986) 174; Crossan (1991) 196.

62 See, for example Galula (1964); Kilcullen (2010). Readers of influential texts of the postcolonial era would conclude that the population that supports an insurgency must be convinced, through their appreciation of benefits and security, to switch their sympathy from the insurgents to the governing power. For a critique of modern COIN doctrine, see Porch (2011); Ucko (2012).

63 Shaw (1984) 14–16, citing the *Digest* 1.18.13. Shaw bases his claims on the logical assumption that later legal compilations originate in the late Republican and early Imperial eras. He further writes (36–37): "In most ancient and modern cases where bandits are successfully hunted down, one of the major causes of their final demise is the abandonment of a

than a sustained and lengthy competition for allegiance. While moderns often contrast the constraints of time and tactics imposed on counterinsurgency campaigns by "liberal democracies," we should note that it would have been political (and perhaps personal) suicide for Vespasian to begin a long-term counterinsurgency effort of the sort advocated by modern theorists.[64] His culture and his emperor expected quick results. Likewise, the long-term posting of three legions to an area of decidedly limited strategic important was, from the Roman point of view, a dangerous and expensive proposition. Furthermore, in the aftermath of Nero's fall and death, and the struggle over imperial authority that followed, the concentration and confinement of the Judaean problem within the walls of Jerusalem made practical sense. If there were more rebels and rebel sympathizers defending those walls (and, not incidentally, consuming the food stores), there were fewer in the hills and caves, where it would be more difficult to detect and engage them.

What would have been the effect of leaving the population intact in the villages and countryside? Could the Romans count on their support? In large cities like Sepphoris and Tiberias, in which lived a faction (usually the socially and economically prominent) for whom peace with Rome was preferable to insurrection, there was some hope—provided, of course, that this element could convince or compel competing factions to refrain from revolt.[65] In these instances, the Romans were ready to make overtures via prominent allies like Agrippa II. In small villages, which would lack pro-Roman elites, but would have ties of kinship and friendship to the insurgents, there was little hope of winning allegiance, or even obedience, without leaving a military presence to ensure it. Such a recourse was neither feasible nor in accord with Roman custom.

Furthermore, Vespasian had no reason to believe that he could win with a "hearts-and-minds" strategy. The Julio-Claudian Jewish policy had, in the main, sought to engage the Jewish elites on those terms, and had ultimately been discredited in the aftermath of Beth-horon. There was little basis for constructing a mutually respectful relationship; the recent and distant past afforded little hope that might change. Jew and Gentile had slaughtered each other en masse

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regional base, either by choice or compulsion. Almost every Roman legal text *assumes* the existence of at least one of these two bases of support."

64 E.g., S. Jones (2008) xii, 10 who calculates an average of fourteen years to suppress an insurgency.

65 Galula's "second law" of counterinsurgency (1964) 53 "The technique of power consists in relying on the favorable minority in order to rally the neutral majority and to neutralize or eliminate the hostile minority."

at the opening of the revolt, not only through brutality but treachery as well; trust was nowhere to be found. Even the fearsome Roman legion had proved vulnerable, and the awe in which it had been held needed to be restored.

The means chosen by Vespasian to effect awe was, quite simply, terror. Such a course was hardly unknown to citizens of states that had fought Rome; it was particularly familiar to the survivors of rebellion. The massacres and arson were not ends in themselves; they were intended not only to remove particular support from particular insurgent groups, but also to intimidate foe and friend alike. One might make an analogy to the peculiar choices of execution for *latrones* in the Roman legal system—the *summa supplicia*, if you will.[66] It was not enough to execute by strangulation or axe—such are the prerogatives of citizens and kings—rather, the death of *latrones* must be spectacularly nasty: rending by animals and crucifixion being popular options. Such spectacles shock and haunt the imagination of their viewers—as do the corpses of children and other innocents among the ashes of rural villages. The groves of crucified corpses sprouting up around Jerusalem during the siege did not deter rebellion within the walls, but served as an unambiguous lesson for others. Should it ever have entered the mind of collaborators, such Agrippa II, to abandon their loyalty to Rome, such memories may have voiced arguments that could silence their discontent. A lesson in loyalty was timely—for it is hard to imagine that the Romans could have forgotten the fate of the Roman garrison in Jerusalem, which was abandoned by its local allies before being murdered by treachery. Furthermore, since Agrippa's troops (which consisted of a significant portion of the light-armed foot and cavalry) were likely participating in the raids and massacres, they would have thereby alienated their compatriots and been forced into closer collusion with the Romans. Finally, the survivors of the disaster at Beth-horon could look upon their vengeance, and the comrades of those slain by treachery vent their rage.[67]

The Romans were either not overly concerned about *lestai* fleeing to the fortified cities, or intended them to concentrate there. A great problem of a counterinsurgency force is to bring the insurgents into open battle. A concentration of insurgents is an opportunity to win a victory under conditions more suitable to the imperial power. While Josephus seemed to take great delight in the difficulty and the cost of the sieges, and wax dramatic on their perils,

66 Shaw (1984) 20–21, "The punishment of bandits was clearly viewed as a form of state retribution and public terrorism."

67 It is striking that there is no record of Vespasian ritually burying or honoring the dead of the Cestian disaster. Contrast Germanicus' burial of the bones scattered at the scene of the Varian disaster.

the outcomes were never seriously in doubt, and the Galilean cities and forts toppled fairly quickly. The Romans consistently demonstrated their excellence at siege-craft, and neither courage nor numbers availed the defenders. Indeed, the numbers within the walls caused more difficulty to the besieged than the besiegers, since food and water grew scarce more quickly.[68] The apparently inexorable Roman advance eroded the morale of the northern insurgency—most of Galilee succumbed to Roman authority after Jotapata and Tarichaea were taken. The insurgency coalesced once more at Gamala, Mount Tabor, and Gischala, where it was ultimately crushed.

In conclusion, Vespasian's strategy and tactics were sound and successful. He dismissed the possibility of a long-term courtship of the Jewish population as impractical, and chose instead to terrorize it, thereby causing it to concentrate in places of illusory safety, which he destroyed piecemeal. The great siege of Jerusalem was the culmination of this process.

Removing the Perceived Cause of the Revolt

It is not enough to crush a revolt; one must seek to prevent its recurrence. To do so, one must identify its causes.[69] Some of these would be systemic, and there was little Vespasian would be willing or capable to do about them, even if he were aware of them. Some would be peculiar to the revolt, and the most apparent to Vespasian in this case would be the religious radicalism present among the Jews of Palestine and the failure of the Jewish priesthood to rule effectively on behalf of Rome.

It must be emphasized that the Flavians did not outlaw, or even suppress, Judaism. Instead they altered it, by destroying elements that rooted a particular Jewish identity in its tradition and thereby undermined its compatibility with Roman rule, while allowing more congenial elements to continue. A recent analogy, if not a precedent, existed in the divergent handling of the druids in Britain and Gaul. Although there is no indication that the Romans seriously attempted to eradicate the druids in Britain immediately upon their initial invasion in 43, when Vespasian commanded the *legio II Augusta*, they proved enough of a catalyst of resistance to Roman rule for Claudius to outlaw them

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68 L. Brice reminded me of Caesar's refusal to admit prisoners during the siege of Alesia, when the Mandubii and their families were compelled by the other Gauls to leave the fortifications because of the scarcity of food (*B Gall.* 7.78). In essence, the Romans knew that the greater were the number of the defenders, the sooner the defense would be ended by starvation.

69 See, e.g., Galula (1964) 50, "To deprive the insurgent of a good cause amounts to solving the country's basic problems."

in 54 (Suet. *Claud*. 25.5; cf. Pliny 29.3).[70] Within six years, Suetonius Paulinus was directing the last movement of the twilight of their gods at Mona, the last bastion of the druids, even as the Britons in the east rose in response to Roman outrages against Boudicca.[71]

Across the channel, over a half century earlier, a rebellion in Long-Haired Gaul had prompted Drusus to undermine the legal and political functions of the druids by founding the sanctuary of the Three Gauls at Lugdunum (modern Lyons). The notion was that the priesthood of the three provinces would devolve on the Gallic aristocracy, who were more compatible with Roman rule, and draw on indigenous political and religious practices in a Roman setting. An altar was dedicated to the goddess Roma and Augustus, and a Romanized Gaul (Gaius Julius Vercondaridubnus) was elected as the first priest of that cult.[72] Lugdunum prospered. The cult made a significant contribution to the creation of a Gallo-Roman identity, and marginalized or coopted the druids to the point that they did not become a serious threat to stability.

The contrast between Britain and Gaul is notable: if the imperial sanctuary at Camulodunum had been meant to serve an analogous function to that at Lugdunum, it failed, and was destroyed by the rebels in the Boudicca revolt on the grounds that it was a citadel of eternal domination (Tac. *Ann*. 14.31.6–7).[73] The lesson learned would have been clear: when a religious (and hence ethnic) identity is set in opposition to compatibility with Roman rule, it must be subverted or destroyed.

The religious dimension to a number of nativist revolts would no doubt be familiar to Vespasian,[74] and probably reinforced his perception of Jewish religion as undermining stability in the region. If he were not cognizant of the messianic and apocalyptic inclinations of a significant number of Jews—as evidenced in Judas of Galilee, Theudas, and Menahem bar Judah—and their intrinsic hostility to gentile rule, he would have rapidly have become aware of the unrest inherent in religious divisions and the revolutionary character of

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70 Contrast the druids in Britain and Gaul. Although Augustus and Tiberius shared Roman disdain for some rituals associated with druids—especially human sacrifice—they had not taken measures to suppress them.

71 Dudley and Webster (1965) 53 make a causal connection between the assault on the druidic 'headquarters' and the revolt, but Dyson (1971) 260 is reasonably cautious. He (261) prefers to emphasize "psycho-religious activities which are close to those of modern nativistic movements."

72 Fishwick (1996) 81.

73 Dyson (1971) 259.

74 Dyson (1971) 258–66, 273–4.

the *sicarii* and zealots. He and his son Titus needed to devise a solution, and that solution did not include the continued presence of the Temple.

Under the Julio-Claudians, the Temple and its priests survived the reprisal of Varus (due to policy, not mercy: Josephus claimed that Varus crucified two thousand Jews outside of Jerusalem), it perished at the hands of Titus. There is debate whether the destruction of the Temple by Titus was deliberate. Those who would argue that the destruction of the Temple was an accident, as Josephus claims, have not yet satisfactorily addressed the fact that Vespasian also ordered the dismantling of the temple erected by the Jewish population of Egypt at Leontopolis. This razing was not the product of the heat of battle but rather a deliberate and calculated act, commanded by Vespasian in response to sedition in Alexandria that was sparked by zealots who had escaped the Roman counterinsurgency operations in Judaea (*BJ* 7.420–1, 433–6).[75]

Titus was not content with the destruction of the Temple, but chose to kill numbers of its priests after taking them prisoner (*BJ* 6.322). While this slaughter may have arisen from rage and indignation at perceived ingratitude and defiance, we cannot but consider that it was calculated. The priesthood, erstwhile and potential agents of Roman indirect rule, were not admitted into the postwar leadership, and no high priest was appointed after 70.[76] Unlike the Julio-Claudians, who had worked with cooperative religious and social elites, the Flavians abandoned them in favor of direct military rule, supplemented by gentile city councils and *coloniae*.[77]

The destruction of the Temple, the eclipse of its priesthood, and the banishment of Jews from Jerusalem altered the character of Judaism by removing the possibility of continuing traditional rites and relationships.[78] On the other

75 In response to the unrest in Egypt after the war, which Josephus attributed to Sicarii who fled to Alexandria, Vespasian ordered Lupus to demolish the famous temple at Leontopolis, in the *nome* of Heliopolis. On receipt of Vespasian's commands, Lupus began the work of destruction, but died soon after, and the task was completed by his successor, Paulinus. See also Mantel (1968) 230 on this event.

76 Avidov (2009) 3–5; Choi (2013) 167, 174. Nor were the rabbis allowed to wield political power; even during the revolt, their realm was confined to religious and social concerns Choi (2013) 186–8, 207.

77 Choi (2013) 213–16. Choi notes (151) that the decision to rely on direct military rule had limited precedent in 70.

78 Newsome (1992) 311: "Because the venue of priestly worship was now gone, the great festivals of Judaism, once celebrated by pilgrim bands who converged upon the Temple, now found other settings within the synagogue and the home. The synagogue, in fact, now took on an added importance as the primary place where the community comes together for the worship of God."

hand, the Flavians allowed Talmudic Judaism to flourish, and left intact the synagogues of the diaspora, now cut adrift from their mooring lines that once stretched all the way to the Holy of Holies.[79] To what end? These were considerably more cosmopolitan and accommodating to Roman influence. No procurator need fear a riot when hanging a shield by a synagogue—indeed, some synagogues in Alexandria were said to have been adorned with shields inscribed to emperors.[80] Perhaps it was the hope of Vespasian and his sons that these would orient Jews more to a cosmopolitan, hybrid, identity. And the modern traveler to the synagogue at Sepphoris will note a striking mosaic on the floor, dated to the fifth century AD, which suggests that the Jews of Galilee eventually fulfilled the Flavian ambition. Not only does the mosaic depict humans, but even figures from Greco-Roman mythology—the zodiac in its full glory, labeled in Hebrew and Greek.[81]

Neither Vespasian nor Titus took the title "Judaicus," although they did promote the victory as important to the restoration of world order by their dynasty.[82] The Flavians made it quite clear that the traditional Jewish religious identity was not merely vanquished, but supplanted. The Arch of Titus features Romans carrying a menorah: a vivid reminder of the rubble of the Temple and the violation of its sanctity and, perhaps, a cue to those more familiar with history that the Romans had accomplished what Antiochus IV had not.[83] Given that the image on the Arch recalls a triumph, which is celebrated at the con-

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79 Roth (2014) 8 makes a similar observation, although he does not perceive a deliberate Roman policy: "Most interesting is the extent to which the Romans fostered a moderate alternative, one more amenable to Roman authority, than to radical religious cults. It is not necessary to think that the Romans did this as a conscious strategy, but there is no question that they developed policies that fostered the growth of a Talmudic Judaism, that taught that Jews were required to obey secular authority."

80 Roth (1956) 174–7 notes an anti-iconic radicalism, aimed against the pro-Roman aristocracy around the time of the revolt, ceding to a partial acceptance of the Roman way of life and cosmopolitan influences (even in the decoration of synagogues) after the destruction of Jerusalem.

81 If the above hypothesis is true—and it cannot be proven—then the implication for not only Judaism, but all religion, is profound. Counterinsurgency, whether applied intelligently or not, can reshape religious as well as social order. One could even argue that it must reshape religious order, if the imperial power is to convert (so to speak) the "hearts and minds" of a subject populace so that they will adapt themselves to the imperial political, cultural, and even cosmic order.

82 Overman (2002) 215; esp. 215–19 for propaganda against Judaism.

83 Cf. Mason (2011) 128, quoting the inscription on the arch (*CIL* 6.944): he subdued the nation of the Judaeans and destroyed the city of Jerusalem" (*urbem Hierusolymam … delevit*).

quest of a foreign people, the religion of the insurrection, its defining feature, is defined as foreign and defeated. The plunder ripped from the Temple, after having been carried in triumph through the streets of Rome, found a new home, on permanent display in Vespasian's Temple of Peace (*BJ* 7.158–161). For those beyond the gates of Rome, the suppression of the revolt was celebrated in a long series of coins, spanning two and a half decades, and numbering 48 types, proclaiming "Judaea Capta."[84] And, speaking of coins, Vespasian converted the Temple tax to a fund for the benefit of the temple to Capitoline Jupiter (the *fiscus Judaicus*). The Flavians abandoned the policy of engagement with and concessions to the Jewish population of the Empire.

While these dynastic measures were moderated under Nerva, their effects were far-reaching, and the Flavian structure of governance for Palestine endured. The Temple and its cult were no more, the synagogues survived on sufferance, and Judaism adapted. But this imperial cosmopolitanism was yet far distant in the painful years after the revolt, as the bloody and widespread rebellions of the second century were soon to demonstrate. But standing amidst the wrack and ruin of the temple, high on the plateau of Jerusalem, the Roman legionaries might be excused for thinking that the problem was settled. For on that day—unlike years past, when riots broke out if Pilate brought troops into Jerusalem carrying their standards—on that day, nobody protested when they "brought their standards to the Temple and, having set them up opposite its eastern gate, offered sacrifices to them there and hailed Titus as *imperator* (*BJ* 6.316)."

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84 Goodman (1993) 235 notes that such types were typical for celebrating victories over foreign enemies, not revolts.

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CHAPTER 10

From Batavian Revolt to Rhenish Insurgency

Brian Turner

Introduction

In late summer 69, in the midst of the Year of the Four Emperors, when Galba and Otho were already dead, and Vitellius and Vespasian were mustering armies for their epic struggle in northern Italy, Gaius Julius Civilis, a Batavian and a Roman, instigated widespread violence along the Gallo-German frontier.[1] His forces quickly secured control of his ancestral homeland, that island of sorts created by the expulsion of the Rhine and Waal rivers into the North Sea. In the ensuing months, the participation of various allied and free peoples living along both sides of the Rhine magnified the uprising. By the spring of the following year, some of them had even declared a Gallic Empire. Glumly Tacitus described the mood in Rome: *Isdem diebus crebrescentem cladis Germanicae famam nequaquam maesta civitas excipiebat; caesos exercitus, capta legionum hiberna, descivisse Gallias non ut mala loquebantur* ("In those days Rome received without concern the increasing chatter about the German disaster; the slaughter of armies, the capture of legionary camps, the defection of the Gauls were not spoken of as misfortunes," Tac. *Hist.* 4.12).

Perhaps in the midst of a smoldering Capitol and bloodstained forum, when Rome resembled a captured city (Tac. *Hist.* 4.1), and the memory of Vitellius' mutilated corpse being tossed into the Tiber was still fresh (Suet. *Vit.* 17), the Romans can be forgiven for not taking seriously the disaster in Germany. But by late spring 70, with all other contenders dead, and Vespasian's claim secured, the Romans responded with vigor. By October, a little more than a year after it had begun, Vespasian's general, Quintus Petilius Cerialis, had completely quelled the uprising.[2]

Tacitus, the principal source of these events, could not—or chose not to—define precisely what had occurred along the Rhine. Instead, he repeatedly

1 Unless otherwise noted, in this chapter all dates are CE and all translations are my own.

2 Tacitus describes the entire affair in his *Histories* (4.1–37, 54–79, 5.14–26); Wellesley (2000) and Lendering and Bosman (2012) offer compelling and clear narratives.

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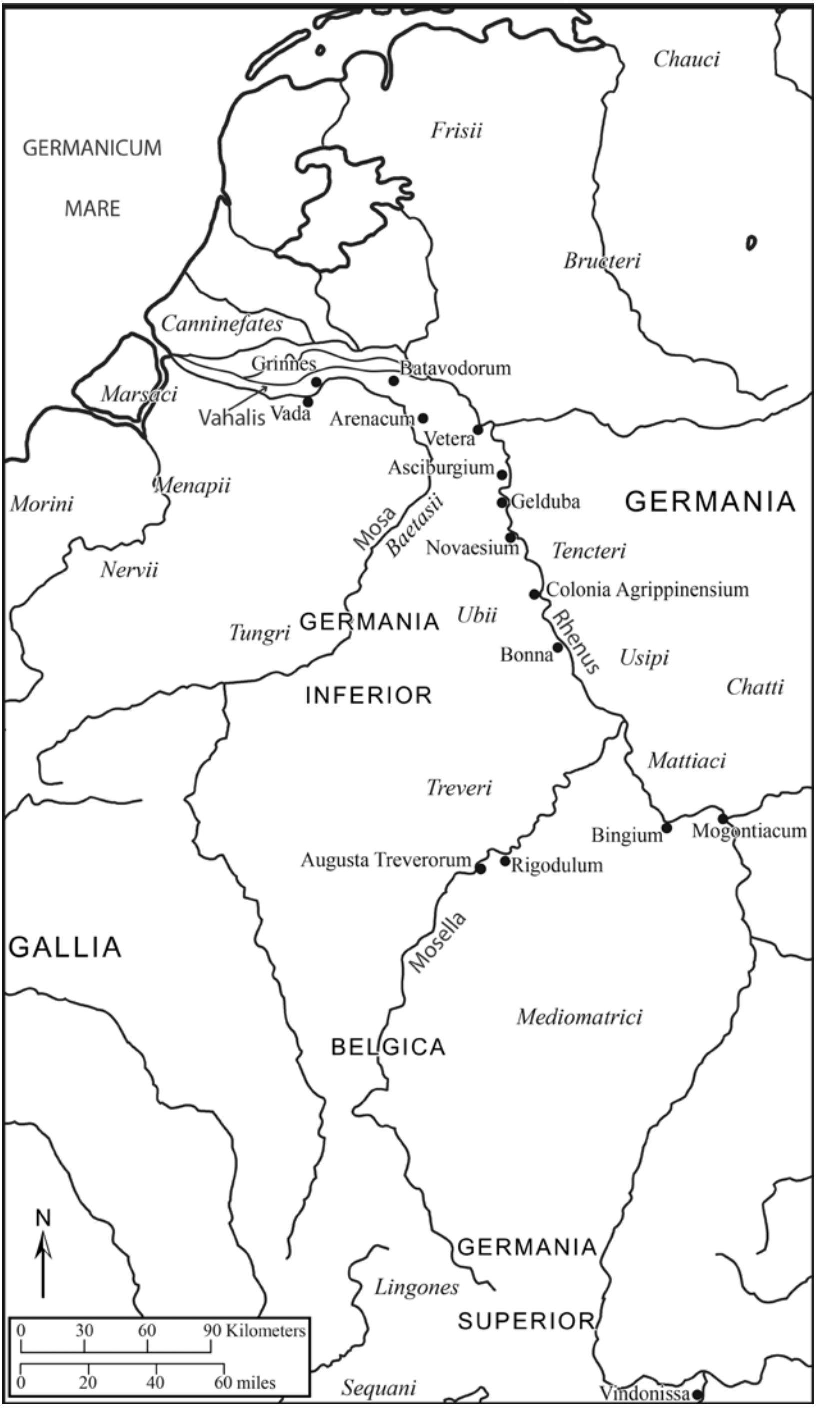


FIGURE 10.1 *Important sites during the Batavian revolt in Germania and Gaul.*

classified the uprising as both a civil and foreign war.[3] As a result of such ambiguity, modern scholars have constructed various competing interpretations of the precise nature of the violence. Traditionally, they have viewed Civilis as instigating a genuine independence movement and have therefore called the violent action along the Rhine the "Batavian revolt" or *der Bataveraufstand*.[4] If not for their freedom, then the goal of the revolt may have been the restoration of the traditional special status that had long bonded the Batavians and Romans in a relationship which required no taxation, but rather the right to levy troops. On this view, harsh recruiting practices, and more widespread Roman interference, soured that relationship and sparked the uprising.[5] Finally, some scholars have argued that Tacitus' ambiguity stems from the fact that he, his sources, and even the participants in the uprising were trying to mask Vespasian's role in prompting Civilis' actions against Vitellius; in other words, the uprising, at least when it started, was just another theater in the civil war which followed the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.[6] Reflecting both the historiographic debate and discomfort with categorizing these events as either

3 *civilis externique* ("civil and foreign," Tac. *Hist*. 4.22); *interno simul externoque* ("internal and at the same time external," Tac. *Hist.* 2.69); *trina bella civilia, plura externa ac plerumque permixta* ("three civil wars, more external ones and often these were blended together," Tac. *Hist.* 1.2). Van Rossum (2004) 120 emphasizes how our varied sources complicate any analysis. Josephus (*BJ* 7.75–88) briefly summarizes the war as a Gallo-German attempt to overthrow the slavery of Empire; see further Lavan (2013) 142–44. Whatever Dio Cassius wrote, his medieval epitomizer Xiphilinus, dismissed (65.3.1). Pliny the Elder wrote a history of the war, but the text, most probably one of Tacitus' major sources, has been lost; see Hose (1998) 297–98.

4 See, for example, Brunt (1990b); Dyson (1971) 264–67; Woolf (2011) 32. For the German term see Schmitz (2008); Timpe (2005). See also the entry in *Der Neue Pauly* (as well as its English translation). Besides Tacitus' characterization, such an interpretation can be traced back to the Renaissance when Dutch subjects of a foreign monarchy (the Spanish Hapsburgs) looked towards Civilis and the Batavians as model nationalists and freedom fighters; see Hessing (2001) and Ash (2006).

5 For the development of the relationship, see Roymans (2004). For the recruitment practices see Tac. *Hist.* 4.14: far from claiming the fit and ferocious for service, the Romans chose the old and infirm so that they could extort money for their peaceful release, and the young and attractive as victims for rape. See Flaig (1995) 53; Van Driel-Murray (2003) 212; Schmitz (2008) 123–25; Willems and Van Enckevort (2009) 21–3 and 108–12.

6 See especially Walser (1951); Bessone (1972); Urban (1985); Brunt (1990b) thoroughly challenged Walser's interpretation; for a more moderate position see Flaig (1995) especially 52 and Van Rossum (2004) 120 and n. 21.

"Batavian" or as a "revolt," one recent survey even called the whole affair the "so-called Batavian revolt."[7]

Historians have also called the uprising an "insurrection," and its participants "insurgents," but when these cognates of insurgency are employed it is clear that they have served predominantly as simple synonyms for revolt, or rebellion.[8] Such an easy equation of terminology limits the explanatory power of both concepts because it tends to simplify the meaning of insurgency and render it solely as a category of conflict in which a subject people struggle for independence from a colonial power. But as any survey of the modern scholarship will quickly illustrate, insurgency is a much more complicated concept.[9] It can refer to guerrilla war, "low-intensity, irregular, asymmetrical, complex, hybrid or unconventional warfare—what was known in an earlier era as a *la petite guerre* or 'small war'."[10] It not only describes a peculiar type of conflict, but also a strategy or tactic designed to allow a weaker force to defeat a stronger, usually by protracting the war and concentrating on an opponent's weaknesses.[11] In theory, therefore, while colonial powers can be the target of an insurgency, they can also employ insurgent tactics and strategies. With a definition so flexible, it is at best difficult, at worst uninformative, simply to equate an ancient event to a modern model without careful consideration.

In fact, scholars of ancient Roman imperialism have begun to challenge the "crude 'us versus them' stereotype" that dominates the study of such conflicts.[12]

7 "Der sog. Bataveraufstand im Zusammenhang mit dem römischen Bürgerkrieg der Jahre 69/70 n. Chr." The title of the entry for the revolt in Wittke et al. (2007) 190–91. Note also the title of Urban (1985) and the comment of one reviewer, Schillinger-Häfele (1986) 656: "Das—im Anschluß an Walser und Bessone—gewonnene Ergebnis drückt sich in den Anführungszeichen aus, in denen das Wort *Bataveraufstand* im Titel steht."

8 Syme (1958), for example, described the uprising as a "rebellion on the Rhine" (172); an "open revolt" (172); fought by "insurgents" (173); a "Batavian revolt" (174); and a "tribal insurrection" (174); Roymans (2004) 206: "... at the outbreak of the revolt in 69. Once the Batavians had decided on insurrection at their assembly ..."; Willems and Van Enckevort (2009) 24 title the uprising "the Batavian revolt" and then claim that the Germanic troops "joined the insurgent Batavians"; Mattern (2010) 166 refers to the "revolt of Julius Civilis" in an article about insurgency. Woolf (2011) 27, "'Revolt' like 'rebellion' denies legitimacy to an insurrection ..."

9 See, in general, the numerous contributions in *RHIC*, but especially Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012).

10 Boot (2013) xxiv.

11 Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012) 11.

12 Mattingly (2011) 60. See also Wiedemann (1994) 427–30 and Roymans (2004) 226 for comments on Tacitus' stereotypically binary narrative.

Others have sought to explain moments of violent instability as the result of the very patronage network upon which the empire was built and maintained.[13] Experts from various other historical fields have likewise identified a version of insurgency occurring in modern societies that still rely on patronage relationships rather than strong bureaucratic structures. The subversive violence that erupts in such societies tends to be multi-polar, that is, multiple leaders (nodes of the patronage network) and groups challenge the state and one another for political power. The devolution of power makes it very difficult to develop any sort of overarching political vision or agenda while at the same time increasing the likelihood of competition among local leaders and their followers. Moments of internal political dysfunction at the center, such as succession crises, can often ignite and magnify this competition at the periphery; however, the nature of the patronage based imperial system actually limits insurgents' ability to achieve a complete overthrow of the state.[14]

While there is no reason to find an exact match between ancient events and modern theoretical constructions, at the very least this network-centric insurgency model provides a means for reassessment of ancient conflicts that have been so easily described as revolts or insurgencies. The following examination first identifies the multiple leaders and groups, as well as their motives and loyalties, during the tumult along the Rhine in 69–70. Consequently, it challenges the fallacious corporatism and ideological purity that labels like the "Batavian revolt" necessarily create. While this first section considers insurgency as a category of conflict, the next two examine insurgency as a strategy or tactic and focus primarily on how the insurgents fought and how the Romans ultimately responded. In the end, rather than a revolt, there emerges a Rhenish insurgency, a multi-polar competition for power in which various individual leaders organized followers, relied on violent and subversive action, regularly pursued an indirect approach, but often—as the competitive environment and the nature of ancient warfare logically necessitated—eschewed protraction in favor of decisive victory.

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13 See especially Mattern (2010) and Braund (1989). For the role of patronage in the Roman world see Garnsey and Saller (1987) 20–40 and Ando (2010) 177–92.

14 Reno (2012), especially 161–64 where he describes the phenomenon in detail. Woolf (2011) 29 also reflects on some of the limitations of a structural analysis of revolts. See also, Mattern (2010) 178; Metz (2012) 39–40.

A Multi-Polar Insurgency

Despite a tendency to employ distinctly binary categories,[15] Tacitus illustrates how a network of political relationships along the Rhine in 69–70 contributed to the developing insurgency. He shows multiple charismatic and duplicitous leaders and their (sometimes erstwhile) followers exploiting and challenging not only Rome, but also one another for political power. While he presents a number of real and perceived injustices he also consistently emphasizes the role the imperial succession crisis had on the formation of this Rhenish insurgency.

Patronage dominated the relationship between the Romans and Batavians.[16] Their ancient alliance (*antiqua societas*, Tac. *Germ.* 29) required the Batavians to supply the Roman army with auxiliary soldiers, but allowed their kinsmen to lead them and exempted them from the burden of paying tribute. Julius Caesar probably initiated an early version of this agreement as a semi-private alliance with a leader of one of the warrior bands that dominated the Lower Rhine region; he likely recognized him as a king and may even have granted him Roman citizenship.[17] Under Augustus, this private relationship became imperial policy, and while the kingship fell into abeyance, the royal descendants continued to serve as intermediaries throughout the Julio-Claudian period.[18] Of course, a political alliance based on a patronage relationship between a client royal family and the emperor does not necessarily ensure stability; there was always the possibility of rivalry between royal descendants or with enterprising newcomers, especially when there were disruptions at the imperial center.[19]

Gaius Julius Civilis, one of the most prominent Batavian royals, illustrates the tenuous and potentially disruptive nature of this patronage relationship. Although he had Roman citizenship and had served in the *auxilia* for twenty-five years, Civilis and his kinsman, Julius Paulus, were arrested and charged (perhaps falsely) with plotting a rebellion against Nero sometime in late 67

15 Roymans (2004) 226.

16 Modern scholars such as Roymans (2004) and Van Driel-Murray (2003) even maintain that the Romans heavily influenced the formation of the Batavian polity and ethnic identity. See also Derks (2009).

17 Roymans (2004) 56–8, 61–5 and 211.

18 Roymans (2004) 195–209, and especially 211.

19 Roymans (2004) 63.

or early 68 (Tac. *Hist.* 4.13, 32).[20] While Paulus was executed, Civilis was sent in chains to the emperor. Before Civilis suffered a similar fate, Nero committed suicide and Galba, the new emperor, acquitted him. Civilis returned to his homeland where the Roman armies led by Vitellius demanded his execution, presumably for his perceived connection to Galba (Tac. *Hist.* 4.13). At this point, he became a pawn in the imperial patronage network—or at least that was what the contenders assumed. Vitellius protected him because he thought Civilis could muster the support of the Batavians (Tac. *Hist.* 1.59).[21] Vespasian, or at least his supporters Antonius Primus and Hordeonius Flaccus, asked Civilis to begin a "German uprising" (*tumultus Germanici*) in order to preoccupy Vitellius and his legions while Vespasian's forces marched on Italy (Tac. *Hist.* 4.13). Stretched between two competing nodes of the imperial patronage network, Tacitus is clear that Civilis chose a third option, his own kingship (*regnum*) of Gaul and Germany (4.18). As Tacitus has him claim, *dum alii Vepasianum, alii Vitellium foveant, patere locum adversus utrumque* ("while some support Vespasian, and others Vitellius, there was room to attack both," *Hist.* 4.17). In other words, Civilis was securing his own position regardless of who eventually won the Roman civil war.

Patronage politics also meant that support for this endeavor was not guaranteed. Even though Tacitus says that Civilis drove the *universam Batavorum gentem in arma* ("the whole Batavian nation to arms," *Hist.* 4.21), such uniform corporatism is incorrect, and really only a typical platitude so frequently promoted during such undertakings and repeated by historians both ancient and modern.[22] Rather, a close reading of Tacitus' text reveals the furtive opening stages of an insurgency in which Civilis had to compete for support not only with Rome but also with other leaders in his community and even in the broader region along the Rhine.

Tacitus famously described how Civilis first presented his plan at a gathering of inebriated fellow nobles in a grove sacred to the Batavians (*Ann.* 4.14; cf. *Germ.* 22).[23] Apparently, after his companions reached a suitable level of revelry, Civilis offered a fiery speech praising Batavian patriotism and denouncing the Romans. He emphasized the Romans' severity and the harsh service

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20 The manuscript tradition is unclear about Paulus' precise identity. Civilis calls him his brother (Tac. *Hist.* 4.32), but he may also have been a cousin, Wellesley (2000) 169.

21 Lendering and Bosman (2012) 94–5; Cosme (2011) 318.

22 Tacitus later describes the *universa Germania* ("whole of Germany," *Hist.* 4.28) supporting Civilis.

23 Rembrandt, perhaps even more famously, exchanged drunken revelry for solemnity in his seventeenth century painting *The Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis*.

requirements that permanently separated families (Tac. *Hist.* 4.14).[24] He then ensured their loyalty through a series of barbaric rites and patriotic oaths (Tac. *Hist.* 4.15). Even if Tacitus invented the entire scene or exaggerated or misunderstood the participants' complaints, its inclusion suggests that he and his readers expected that Civilis had to build support in secret and through the employment of traditional Batavian politics.

Civilis then sent envoys to the Canninefates, a people of shared origin and language, only less numerous (Tac. *Hist.* 4.15). There was little doubt about their taste for sedition, at least among a large and powerful segment of their population who had a long history of challenging imperial authority. For example, Brinno was chosen as their leader because of his family's insubordinate reputation; his father was particularly infamous for publically mocking Caligula's fraudulent triumph in Gaul and Germany.[25] If, as Roymans suggests, the Canninefates were themselves connected to the Batavians in a patronage-like relationship, then Civilis' immediate decision to seek their assistance at the outset of his nascent insurgency illustrates a clear concern for securing support in his local community.[26] It has also been argued that the Canninefates may actually have initiated the subversive violence months before Civilis. If such an alternative chronology is correct, it only confirms the existence of a competitive environment in which various individuals and groups challenged the (waning) authority of the Roman Empire and each other.[27]

According to Tacitus (*Hist*. 4.15), Civilis also approached the infamous eight Batavian cohorts and gained their support through secret messages. Although Vitellius had dismissed these cohorts after his victory over Otho at Bedriacum in April 69, he had recently recalled them as Vespasian's forces prepared to invade Italy in September. It was, therefore, not a foregone conclusion that they would join Civilis; the soldiers faced a very real dilemma.[28] In fact, Tacitus wrote that Civilis seduced them (*pellexit*, Tac. *Hist.* 4.15). While the verb *pellicere* appears nowhere else in the extant books of the *Histories*, it does appear a half dozen times in what survives of Tacitus' *Annales*. It regularly implies

24 Adler (2011) 130–35.

25 Wellesley (2000) 168. For the mockery, Tac. *Hist.* 4.15; for Caligula's adventures, Suet. *Calig.* 47.

26 Roymans (2004) 92 and 205–7.

27 See Cosme (2011) 309; see also Brunt (1990b) 48–9.

28 Wellesley (2000) 173–4. Flaig (1995) 55–7 also emphasizes the role and peculiar desires of the eight cohorts, who chose the affirmation of the special status over integration into the Roman Empire. Cosme (2011) especially 318, discusses Civilis' potential connection to the eight Batavian cohorts and their relationship with the German imperial body guard.

sexual seduction (Tac. *Ann.* 4.3; 12.3; 13.45), but it also describes the purchase of political support. So, for example, Augustus *militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit* ("seduced the army with gifts, the people with grain, and everyone else with the sweetness of peace," Tac. *Ann.* 1.2), and Julius Florus tried *pellicere alam equitum* ("to seduce a cavalry unit," Tac. *Ann.* 3.42) to revolt during Tiberius' Principate.[29] Tacitus' vocabulary, therefore, suggests that Civilis had to cultivate support. Even if this is all again the historian's invention, it still reflects his expectations and his understanding of this conflict as consisting of multiple groups whose loyalties and motivations could not be assumed.

The clandestine beginnings of this insurgency were in part necessary because some Batavians still supported Rome, or at any rate so hated Civilis that they were unwilling to follow him. Tacitus described Claudius Labeo, a Batavian and Roman citizen, as Civilis' rival in some local dispute (*Hist.* 4.18). He was, it seems, part of a rising elite class, the Batavian Claudii, which had recently started to challenge the traditional power of the longer established Julii, of which Civilis was one.[30] When the cavalry unit Labeo led deserted the Romans and joined Civilis, he refused to follow them. After his capture, Civilis could not execute him for fear that he would provoke resentment among his fellow Batavians (Tac. *Hist.* 4.18). Instead he imprisoned his rival with the Frisii, a German tribe far removed from the insurgency's front lines (Tac. *Hist.* 4.56). Like Labeo, Julius Briganticus, Civilis' nephew, did not support his uncle; in fact, Tacitus, who praises Briganticus' loyalty and bravery (*Hist.* 5.21), described their relationship as being consumed by the "sharpest hatred" (*Hist.* 4.70). Unfortunately, Tacitus does not explain the causes of this acrimony; it is worth considering the extent to which Civilis' attack on Roman authority was to blame. In other words, not every Batavian shared the same goal.

The uncertain loyalties of some Batavians may even explain Civilis' feigned support of Vespasian. From the outset of the uprising, Tacitus claims that Civilis chose to conceal his lofty ambition so that he might take into account the course of future events; in other words, since the insurgents would be attacking Roman soldiers loyal to Vitellius, anything short of complete success could be presented as an attempt to help Vespasian (Tac. *Hist.* 4.14). According to Tacitus, Civilis even had his men swear a loyalty oath to Vespasian because

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29 The sixth instance involves an attempt to induce the surrender of a Roman enemy (Tac. *Ann.* 11.19).

30 Some scholars suggest that Civilis was trying to secure his position within the Batavian community; Lendering and Bosman (2012) 95, 97 and also Van Driel-Murray (2003) 200.

he was uncertain about the outcome of his plan and the state of Roman power (*Hist.* 4.21). It was only after Vitellius' death that he *omissa dissimulatione in populum Romanum ruere* ("gave up his masquerade, and stormed the Roman people," Tac. *Hist.*4.54). Such passages provide fodder for those historians who claim that Tacitus was part of some sort of imperial cover-up designed to save Vespasian from the embarrassment of having sparked the disaster along the Rhine.[31] But Civilis' deception and his rivalry with Labeo and Briganticus reflect an insurgency where potential leaders were in competition not only with a centralized power (the top of the patronage network), but also with any number of other potential leaders who sought the security, prestige, and wealth of their own political position whether it was achieved through their joining the insurgency or through their continued loyalty to one of the other contenders. This revelation is an important alternative to the idea that the deception was some sort of imperial cover-up. Civilis' early support of Vespasian, then, can be viewed as a cunning and cautious ploy to ensure his own position and the continued support of his followers, some of whom may have been more than ready to attack Vitellius, whom they viewed as an unsuitable pretender, but were not (yet) ready to sever completely their adherence to a Roman emperor.[32]

Communities in the broader Rhine region also joined the insurgency. Tacitus typically portrays the German peoples east of the Rhine as violent and greedy opportunists who were mostly concerned with the acquisition of plunder (Tac. *Hist.* 4.16, 4.21, 4.37).[33] Evidently, their spirits were buoyed by the fact that their gods had foretold the successful overthrow of the Romans, or so their priestess Veleda claimed (Tac. *Hist.* 4.61). Such stereotypes and premonitions aside, the opportunity to restore their traditional way of life also mattered (Tac. *Hist.* 4.64).[34] After all, even Tacitus could imagine how the Roman Empire had negated traditional relationships all along the Rhine. In a speech invented for one of the German insurgents who was trying to convince his kinsmen to abandon Rome, Tacitus records the complaints, *Nam ad hunc diem flumina ac terram et caelum quodam modo ipsum clauserant Romani ut conloquia congressusque nostros arcerent, vel, quod contumeliosius est viris ad amra natis, inermes ac prope nudi sub custode et pretio coiremus* ("For until today the Romans had closed the rivers, earth and in some degree even the sky itself in order

31 See the Introduction to this chapter.

32 Compare Wellesley's (2000) 175 claim that "cunning or caution impelled him, tongue in cheek, to make his men swear allegiance to Vespasian." See also note 30 above.

33 Tacitus records various German peoples participating in the insurgency: Bructeri and Tencteri (*Hist.* 4.21), and Chatti, Usipi, and Mattiaci (Tac. *Hist.* 4.37) among others.

34 On German habits see Rives (1999) 1–41 and Wells (1972) 14–31.

to prevent our conversing and meeting, or else—something which is more insulting to men born to arms—we would meet unarmed and nearly nude under guard and after paying a toll," Tac. *Hist.* 4.64). The perceived decline of Roman authority opened the door to German incursions which would return the Rhine to its traditional role as a thoroughfare between kinsmen rather than as a sort of political boundary. Importantly, Civilis actively pursued and secured their loyalty, but an imagined shared heritage and hatred of Rome was not enough to secure an alliance. Rather, to ensure support, Civilis sent gifts and hostages to Veleda, the prophetess of the Bructeri and bellwether for the Germans (Tac. *Hist.* 4.61).

Tacitus also described the complaints of the Gallic communities, especially those situated along the Rhine. While some of the communities had parcels of land confiscated by the Romans, the most disturbing development, however, was the perceived inequality between these communities and the rest of Gaul, which had received grants of citizenship and subsequent tax relief (Tac. *Hist*. 1.8, 1.51–3). In other words, the imperial patronage network was unfair. But despite these potential root causes, many of the communities refused to participate in the insurgency, at least for a time (Tac. *Hist.* 4.25, 4.37). As with the Germans, and even his own people, Civils actively pursued their support through diplomacy and bribery (Tac. *Hist.* 4.17).[35] After his initial successes against Roman forces, he returned Gallic auxiliary commanders to their homelands and offered the auxiliary soldiers either discharge with a heft of spoils or continued service with favorable terms (Tac. *Hist.* 4.17). Once again, in secret conversations he reminded them of the miserable slavery they had endured at the hands of the Romans (Tac. *Hist.* 4.17). Such clandestine cultivation of followers offered a way to test and build support for his fledgling insurgency.

Eventually, credible, charismatic, and ambitious Gallic leaders recognized the opportunity, if not the necessity of action.[36] Julius Classicus, who commanded the Treveran cavalry, was among the most noble and wealthy members of his people. He had royal blood and despite his citizenship he proudly promoted his family's anti-Roman history (Tac. *Hist.* 4.55). Julius Tutor was also a Treveran, but of less standing than Classicus. Vitellius had named him prefect of the bank of the Rhine (Tac. *Hist.* 4.55). Julius Sabinus led the Lingones, and likewise claimed illustrious (although probably fraudulent) ancestors, including Gaius Julius Caesar, who was supposed to have had a productive

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35 Talbert (1977) 81 emphasizes the fact that Civilis had to persuade the Gauls to join him.

36 Wiedemann (1994) 427 following scholars like Urban (1985), emphasizes how many of the Gallic leaders had been loyal to Vitellius, so that once he died they remained against Vespasian.

affair with his great-grandmother (Tac. *Hist.* 4.55). That Tutor owed his position to Vitellius, and that Classicus minimized his Roman connections, while Sabinus maximized his, illustrates the random, disorganized and multi-polar nature of this insurgency that lacked a clear and universal ideological motive beyond the aggrandizement of personal power.

These Gallic leaders, of course, could not remain subservient to Civilis, nor the Gauls to the Batavians or Germans.[37] According to Tacitus they joined the insurgency with the "desire to create an empire" (*Hist.* 4.25). Apparently the Gallic leaders believed that the Gauls had every right to determine the extent of their power (Tac. *Hist.* 4.55). Still, like Civilis at the outset of the whole uprising, they carefully and secretly measured support for such an undertaking: *hi secretis sermonibus animos ceterorum scrutari, ubi quos idoneos rebantur conscientia obstrinxere, in colonia Agrippinensi in domum privatam conveniunt* ("They tested the spirit of other [potential insurgents] in secret meetings; then they bound in their plan those they judged suitable while meeting in a private house in Colonia Agrippinensium," Tac. *Hist.* 4.55). The clandestine operation continued as men were sent throughout Gaul to stir up war while the conspirators continued to feign obedience to the Roman Empire (Tac. *Hist.* 4.56). Civilis, even after the Gauls joined the uprising, refused to swear allegiance to the nascent Gallic Empire, nor make any other Batavian do so. Rather, as Tacitus made clear, he pursued his own interests and his own network of supporters: *fisus Germanorum opibus et, si certandum adversus Gallos de possessione rerum foret, inclutus fama et potior* ("he trusted the resources of the Germans and, if there was a struggle against the Gauls over possession of the empire, he had an illustrious reputation and more power," Tac. *Hist.* 4.61). Such competition illustrates how difficult it could be to form widespread and unanimous political visions.

What does seem to have connected the insurgents, or at any rate what Tacitus consistently emphasizes, was the belief that the Roman Empire was crumbling.[38] Although it is impossible to quantify the popularity of the insurgency, it is possible to catalogue Tacitus' many examples of how the participants promoted and accepted a version of disorder that suggested the complete failure of the Roman Empire. Even before the start of the insurgency, Roman power in Lower Germany was demonstrably weakened. With Nero, Galba, and Otho already dead, the imperial pretender Vitellius redeployed some 70,000 Roman soldiers

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37 Timpe (2005) 184–85 notes that Tacitus only insinuates that the Gauls and Batavians shared a rebellious spirit.

38 Flaig (1995) 58–9 notes the importance of the collapse of Roman authority along the Rhine and the subsequent push towards reorganization. See also Connal (2012) 47.

for his march on Italy.[39] In doing so, he left his own province of Lower Germany terribly shorthanded (Tac. *Hist.* 2.57). Civilis exploited the nearly empty legionary bases that remained as fodder to build support for his insurgency (Tac. *Hist.* 4.14). Far from clarifying control, the Roman civil war only added Vitellius to the growing list of dead emperors. The condition of Rome itself swelled Gallic hopes; the burning Capitol was a particularly powerful sign of decline, as not even the warlord Brennus, whose Gauls sacked the city at the beginning of the fourth century BCE, had achieved such a feat. These conflagrations in Rome also enflamed druid prophesies of the end of the Empire (Tac. *Hist.* 4.54). Considering the circumstances it is no surprise that unsubstantiated rumors also claimed that the Roman Empire was under attack in Sarmatia, Dacia, and even Britain (Tac. *Hist.* 4.54).[40] While trying to entice others to join the insurgency, the Treveri and Lingones, two Gallic peoples, competed in spreading stories about Rome's demise: *Certatim proclamant furere discordiis populum Romanum, caesas legiones, vastatam Italiam, capi cum maxime urbem, omnis exercitus suis quemque bellis distineri* ("Zealously they proclaimed that the Roman people were mad with discord, legions had been slaughtered, Italy had been laid to waste, Rome was very nearly captured, and all of its armies were preoccupied with their own wars," Tac. *Hist.* 4.55).

Regardless of the fact that hindsight suggests a remarkably stable collection of provinces, what mattered most was not so much what had happened but what the participants thought was happening, or were told was happening.[41] Rumor and disorder easily spread. In such a climate, even claims that Rome still had "loyal provinces, victorious armies, imperial fortune and avenging gods," (Tac. *Hist.* 4.57) fell on deaf ears; the defeated and dejected Roman armies—not to mention the reports and prophecies mentioned above—belied any sense of imperial destiny and rendered cheap the vengeance of the gods. At the very least, even if Tacitus was exaggerating the conditions in order to praise the ultimate outcome, the volume of these examples suggests that he, and presumably his readers, accepted the possibility that the instability of the wider Empire played a role in the development of this insurgency along the Rhine frontier.

39 Tac. *Hist.* 1.61; Mattern (1999) 96.

40 Chilver and Townend (1985) 67 correctly note that there is no evidence for disorder in Britain or Pannonia, but that reality makes no difference in this case.

41 Talbert (1977) argues for the remarkable stability of the Roman Empire in this period. For the methodological credo see Hopkins (1978) 233.

Insurgent Strategies and Tactics

As noted in the introduction, Tacitus had difficulty categorizing the precise nature of the conflict along the Rhine; he, nevertheless, recognized that it was something different from how the Romans traditionally fought war. Although grandiose, highly rhetorical, and full of historiographical allusion, the speech Tacitus composed for the legionary commander Dillius Vocula, who unsuccessfully tried to convince his soldiers to remain loyal to Rome, illustrates just how much this insurgency challenged the Romans' traditional expectations about warfare.[42] According to Tacitus, he told his legionaries that he was ashamed and sorry because they were *adversus quos non proelium et acies parantur; id enim fas armorum et ius hostium est* ("facing no ordinary array of battle—that is the proper form of warfare in accordance with the normal rules of enemy engagement," Tac. *Hist.* 4.58).[43] In other words, Vocula's soldiers, rather than being defeated in a traditional battle, had ultimately succumbed to the insurgents' particular brand of subversive violence. This grievance reinforces what Tacitus (through another of Vocula's protestations) had just noted about previous uprisings that had been *singulis proeliis concidisse* ("demolished in single battles," Tac. *Hist.* 4.57).[44] What tactics and strategies, then, were waged in this insurgency that rendered it beyond the conventions of "normal" warfare? Guerrilla and indirect warfare were paramount: the insurgents initiated terror attacks, provoked desertions, committed assassinations, developed propaganda, and raided logistical trains. While they appear to have recognized the value of strategic protraction, the insurgents at times forced direct and decisive engagement.

Indirect Attacks

Surprise attacks against civilians and the institutions of Roman power marked the beginning of the insurgency. With the support of some Frisii from beyond the Rhine, Brinno and the Canninefates first attacked the unprepared Roman garrisons along the shore of the North Sea. The insurgents then rushed upon unsuspecting camp followers, and even the merchants scattered throughout the area (Tac. *Hist.* 4.15). In response to the chaos caused by this violence waged against civilians and Roman collaborators, the cohort-prefects ordered the dismantling of indefensible fortifications, while a centurion organized

42 For the speech see Ash (2010); Chilver and Townend (1985) 69; Syme (1958) 685–6.

43 Wellesley's (2009) Penguin translation, offered here, provides the full force of the irregular war to which the Romans were succumbing.

44 He was referring to the revolt of Sacrovir and Florus in 21 and of Vindex in 68.

a tactical retreat of the surviving Roman soldiers, most of whom were raw recruits (Tac. *Hist.* 4.15).

Alongside these terror attacks, the insurgents also relied upon significant desertions which not only expanded their numbers but also, because of their timing, served as high profile examples of the insurgency's growing success. Civilis, for example, at first tried to mask his complicity in Brinno's violent uprising; he emphasized his loyalty to Rome and promised to quell the insurgent Canninefates himself if only Roman reinforcements would return to their winter quarters. According to Tacitus, the Romans immediately recognized this deceptive attempt to divide their forces—evidently Civilis' German allies could not keep a secret (Tac. *Hist.* 4.16). With his true motives revealed, Civilis mustered as many soldiers as he could from the Canninefates, Frisii, and Batavians, and prepared for a pitched battle not far from the Rhine, but still in Batavian territory. Civilis won the ensuing encounter in large part because of the timely desertion of a Tungrian cohort and of Batavian sailors who had been feigning loyalty to the Romans (Tac. *Hist.* 4.16). In the immediate aftermath of this first battle, Hordeonius Flaccus, deployed two legions, the Fifth and the Fifteenth, both of which were undermanned but supported by Ubian and Treveran auxiliaries, and a wing of Batavian cavalry. This last unit of Batavians feigned loyalty until after the battle began because, according to Tacitus, they calculated that their last-minute defection would render them a more lucrative prize (Tac. *Hist.* 4.18). Their ultimate defection and the flight of the Ubian and Treveran auxiliaries again forced the surviving Roman legions to manage a tactical retreat, this time across the Rhine to Vetera.

Such clandestine and powerfully timed betrayals continued well into the year 70 when Classicus and Tutor finally and openly proclaimed the Gallic Empire. Tacitus vividly described their devious defection from Dillius Vocula, who was *Gallorum fraude inlectus* ("lured along by the deceit of the Gauls," *Hist.* 4.57). Only after the Romans approached Vetera, then under insurgent attack, did Classicus, Tutor, and their followers, separate themselves from Vocula's forces. Under the guise of conducting a reconnaissance mission, they established their own walled camp (Tac. *Hist.* 4.57). The desertion forced Vocula to abandon the relief effort and retreat to Novaesium (where he gave the speech discussed above). Some of his centurions and soldiers calculated that now was the time to desert Rome (Tac. *Hist.* 4.57). The timing was vital: the luring of Vocula's army from Mogontiacum (Tac. *Hist.* 4.37) to the territory around Vetera and Novaesium helped divide Roman forces and logistics along a more than 100 mile long stretch of territory and therefore weakened the Romans dramatically. This separation of forces, alongside some very pointed acts of violence (discussed next), may help explain how swiftly the insurgents were

able to force allegiance from the inhabitants (including soldiers) of the Roman strongholds at Colonia Agrippinensium and Mogontiacum (Tac. *Hist.* 4.59).[45] With little Roman support, they had no other choice except death.

The insurgents also relied on calculated assassinations. The murder of Hordeonius Flaccus can be viewed as an act of mob violence, the harsh result of Flaccus' repeated and impolitic support of Vespasian among a body of soldiers so loyal to Vitellius.[46] Vocula, on the other hand, suffered a deliberate assassination. Even he was aware of the threats against his life (Tac. *Hist.* 4.58) when Aemilius Longinus, a deserter from the First Legion, murdered him (Tac. *Hist.* 4.59). Vocula may have been familiar with him since he had once served as one of that legion's tribunes.[47] Perhaps that relationship offered Aemilius the access to announce his desertion with assassination. Other executions included the legionary tribunes and camp prefect from Mogontiacum (Tac. *Hist.* 4.59) as well as the legates Herennius and Numisius (Tac. *Hist*. 4.70). As Tacitus noted, these mutinous murders were thought to be so egregious that they would actually strengthen the bond between those Roman soldiers who had defected and the insurgents whom they had no choice but to join (Tac. *Hist.* 4.70). In other words, such murders were calculated to secure and sustain power.

Not every insurgent attempt at leadership decapitation was so successful. Towards the end of the war, when the tide had already shifted against the insurgents, some Germans instigated a surprise night attack on the Roman fleet harbored along the banks of the Rhine somewhere near Colonia Agrippinensium. The massacre of half-asleep soldiers and sailors was ancillary to a greater ambition: the capture of the Roman flagship on which they assumed the Roman general Cerialis was sleeping. Although the insurgents successfully seized the ship, Cerialis was not on it—his desire for female companionship had him furtively visiting a local Ubian woman. Even without its captain, the ship nevertheless became a valuable tool of propaganda, and a present for the German priestess Veleda (Tac. *Hist.* 5.22).

The insurgents also employed propaganda and psychological attacks to weaken the Romans and invigorate their own supporters. As illustrated above, the leaders of the Rhenish insurgency regularly exploited the idea that the Roman Empire had disintegrated and that they were somehow qualified to pick up the pieces. Early in the insurrection, when faced with a counterattack

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45 For the soldiers' rational calculation see Connal (2012) 45–8.

46 Tacitus (*Hist.* 4.37) describes the violent atmosphere. See also Wellesley (2000) 182, and Connal (2012) 45–6.

47 Chilver and Townend (1985) 69; *ILS* 983.

led by Munius Lupercus, Civilis surrounded himself with captured Roman standards in order to motivate his own men while terrifying the Romans with the memory of former battles (Tac. *Hist.* 4.18).[48] Similarly, while besieging Vetera, Civilis paraded captured Roman standards around his camp and marched Roman prisoners within sight of the garrison.[49] In this context, Tacitus proudly recounts a moment of Roman honor and bravery: one of the captives announced that despite Civilis' display the insurgents had recently been defeated and a relief army was on its way.[50] The informant's immediate execution, according to Tacitus, only confirmed the truth of his announcement (*Hist.* 4.34). Elsewhere Tacitus claims that Civilis kept careful watch over the siege of Vetera so that no secret messengers could raise the spirits of the besieged with the news of the pending arrival of a relief force (Tac. *Hist.* 4.28). Although they may also illustrate a fairly typical feature of siege warfare, such passages also emphasize the importance of psychological warfare among the insurgents.[51]

Such tactics could be wildly successful at gaining the support of the local population, or at least that is what Tacitus portrays among the locals around Augusta Treverorum after the capitulation of the Roman forces at Novaesium in late March or early April 70 marked the insurgency's highpoint. The people there were treated to the sight of multiple Roman legions and their auxiliary units trudging along in defeated disgrace (Tac. *Hist.* 4.62). According to Tacitus, as the news of the Romans' surrender spread, *cuncti qui paulo ante Romanorum nomen horrebant, procurrentes ex agris tectisque et undique effusi insolito spectaculo nimium fruebantur* ("all those who a short time before shuddered at the name of Rome, now rushed out from their farms and houses, spread out everywhere, and took excessive delight in an unfamiliar spectacle," Tac. *Hist.* 4.62). The entire scene reads like some sort of sordid and backwards triumphal procession—a *spectaculum* from a parallel universe that underscored the genuine feasibility of the insurgency and the dire circumstances Rome faced along the

48 Tacitus (4.18) then recalls how the insurgents' wives and children stood in sight of the battlefield as symbols of support or shame. However stereotypical such positioning may have been (see Tac. *Germ.* 7), it also demonstrates the Germans' different approach to warfare.

49 See Levithan (2013) 58.

50 The otherwise unknown soldier was describing the indecisive battle of Asciburgium (Tac. *Hist.* 4.33).

51 Also noteworthy are Tacitus' descriptions of Roman legionaries' refusal to trust the reports of their commanders (*Hist.* 4.24–25, 36–7).

Rhine.[52] To the Romans it better resembled a long funeral procession (*longae exequiae*, Tac. *Hist.* 4.62).

Tacitus also emphasized the fact that the lack of supplies exhausted the Roman soldiers (Tac. *Hist.* 4.35; cf. 4.26). The insurgents, therefore, favored attacks on the Roman logistical network. A careful review of Tacitus' description of how the Romans prepared for the siege of Vetera actually reveals such a tactic. While he first described how the legates Munius Lupercus and Numisius Rufus competently reinforced the fort's defenses and demolished a nearby settlement which could have provided defilade for the besiegers, Tacitus then blamed them for incompetently *rapi permisere* ("allowing [the fort's provisions] to be plundered," Tac. *Hist.* 4.22). His narrative, which criticizes the legates' failures, actually denies the strategic agency of Civilis and the insurgents, who, when faced with a stronger force, sought first to disrupt enemy logistics rather than some sort of decisive battle.

Elsewhere, Tacitus directly described attacks on the Roman supply network. The defense of the Rhine, for example, required the posting of more units along its banks to prevent German incursions. As a result there were more mouths to feed with less food (Tac. *Hist.* 4.26). The increased protection still did not stop a group of Germans from stealing a barge fully stocked with grain that had run aground near Gelduba. The failed defense of the riverbank on that occasion even resulted in a brief mutiny within the Roman ranks and the shackling of the legate Hordeonius Flaccus (Tac. *Hist.* 4.27).[53] The dangers associated with river travel during this period, made worse by an extreme drought which left river levels too low to navigate safely (Tac. *Hist.* 4.26), meant that supplies had to be conveyed over land (Tac. *Hist.* 4.35). Civilis discovered that one of these convoys was transporting supplies north from Novaesium to Vetera (Tac. *Hist.* 4.35). After taking control of bridges and narrow passes along the route, Civilis ambushed the vulnerable convoy (Tac. *Hist.* 4.35). The assault so demoralized the Romans that Vocula was forced to redeploy 1,000 men from the already undermanned Vetera. Those left behind to defend the fort feared insurgent reprisals and complained that they were being deserted (Tac. *Hist.* 4.35). Civilis' attack was wildly successful: it caused the disruption of Roman supply lines, forced the redistribution of fewer forces over a larger area of operations, and, as a result, demoralized the Roman army and energized his followers.

52 For the characterization of the triumph as a *spectaculum*, see Stroup (2007) 37, and Suet. *Claud.* 17. Ash (1998) 37–8 recalls allusions to Livy, especially the disgraced soldiers who surrendered at Caudium.

53 See Tac. *Hist.* 5.21 for another example of the Germans stealing a Roman ship.

As Roman forces began to turn the tide against the insurgents in late summer 70, Civilis again resorted to guerrilla tactics to disturb and disorient the Romans and at the same time reinvigorate his own forces. Having organized the simultaneous attack of four separate Roman positions, he hoped, it seems, that at least one of the assaults would be successful, and could therefore serve as a significant trophy around which the surviving insurgents could rally.[54] Importantly, Tacitus does not describe standard pitched battles. At Arenacum, where the Tenth Legion was stationed, the insurgents attacked those Romans who were out felling timber; they even managed to kill the camp prefect, five first-rank centurions and a few other soldiers (Tac. *Hist.* 5.20). The Germans who attacked Batavodurum, meanwhile, focused their attention on the destruction of a newly constructed bridge (Tac. *Hist.* 5.20). Except for admitting that there was greater danger, Tacitus' description of the assaults on Grinnes and Vada are less detailed, but seemed to involve a swift and violent assault that killed the bravest of the Romans—including Civilis' nephew Briganticus—before the arrival of Roman reinforcements forced the disintegration of the insurgent forces back across the Rhine (Tac. *Hist.* 5.21).

Hemmed in Batavian territory and facing a Roman invasion, Civilis tried one final time to disrupt the supply of the Roman army. At the confluence of the Rhine and Mosa Rivers, where they expel into the North Sea, he deployed a large fleet of ships. The Romans mustered their own fleet, smaller in number but with larger ships and more experienced personnel. Ultimately, nature's winds and currents kept the two sides from a major engagement. After the discharge of a few missiles they sailed apart and Civilis fled. Tacitus' explanation of Civilis' last martial act is typically dismissive and yet illustrative: *Causa instruendae classis super insitam genti vanitatem ut eo terrore commeatus Gallia adventantes interciperentur* ("Beyond the natural vanity of his people, the reason he drew up his fleet was so that the convoys advancing from Gaul would be frightened away by it," *Hist.* 5.23). Although daring, especially if the winds had changed and forced a general engagement, Civilis once again aimed to limit Roman resources.

Such attacks on the Roman logistical network form part of a broader strategy of protracted warfare, a traditional insurgent strategy. Although the entire conflict developed and ended rather swiftly, Tacitus, as the discussion above

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54 Roymans (2004) 148 connects one of the locations, Vada, with the important archaeological site of Kessel/Lith and argues that it was "an important *lieu de mémoire* for the Batavian community…" It was a place that "cannot be understood purely in terms of military strategy." Rather it was the site for an "internal power struggle." In other words, a victory there would both motivate Civilis' insurgents and demoralize his opponents.

implies, recognized that the insurgents were aware of the value of trading space for time, although that was often not a readily available option. For example, when describing the ultimate defeat and capture at Rigodulum of Julius Valentinus, that most ardent instigator of the war (*acerrimus instinctor belli*, Tac. *Hist*. 4.68), Tacitus in part blames the defeat on Valentinus' inability to follow his colleagues' warnings not to engage in a decisive battle (*summae rei periculum*, Tac. *Hist*. 4.71). While the swift and overwhelming arrival of Roman forces made such avoidance of battle on this occasion impossible (Tac. *Hist.* 4.71), the warning, nevertheless, illustrates an understanding that the insurgency's success was in large part dependent upon wearing down the Romans and living to fight another day. Incidentally, this strategy of protraction, of delaying ultimate decisions until absolutely necessary, can also explain Civilis' feigned support of Vespasian, as discussed in the first part of this paper.

Direct Attacks

Although the insurgents regularly relied on indirect warfare, especially whenever they were at a disadvantage, they also accepted, and even sought out, decisive engagements. Of course, even the most traditional insurgencies recognize the ability to transition from unconventional to conventional warfare, from a protracted conflict to open warfare, and back again; indeed, such fluidity could be part of the strategy.[55] In this case, it appears that the swift transitions were the result of the increased competition between various leaders of the insurgency.

There is perhaps no better illustration of the willingness to force a decision than an army's institution of a siege.[56] Tacitus, in two separate passages (Tac. *Hist.* 4.23 and 4.28–30), juxtaposes the completely conventional, albeit inept, insurgent assault against Vetera with the ingenuity, courage, and skill of the fort's Roman defenders. Direct assaults failed miserably. The besiegers' long-range missiles failed to damage the towers and parapets of the walls, yet they were still wounded by stones thrown from above (Tac. *Hist.* 4.23). Their scaling ladders and testudo were easily demolished (Tac. *Hist.* 4.23). Even the mass assaults of German allies failed to make a difference. Tacitus, typically dismissive, concluded that Civilis ordered the assaults because there was so many German allies that any losses could be easily replaced (Tac. *Hist.* 4.28). The insurgents' siege engines were even less effective. Unaccustomed to the practice of engineering, their clumsy constructions were demolished by stones fired from Roman ballistae (Tac. *Hist.* 4.23; see also *Hist.* 4.30). Even the insurgents'

55 Rich and Duyvesteyn (2012) 5–6.

56 See Levithan (2013) especially 22–46 for the "moral context of siege warfare."

wooden shelters were readily destroyed by burning missiles shot from Roman catapults (Tac. *Hist.* 4.23). It was, in fact, the besieged, who developed an ingenious contraption: a sort of claw which swooped down, snatched an invader or two, and deposited them behind the Roman wall where execution could follow (Tac. *Hist.* 30). The skill and courage of the Romans stands in stark contrast to the ineptitude of the insurgents in this type of warfare.[57] However incapable Civilis' force may have been at the science of sieges, the repeated attempt to take the fort by force, as well as the acceptance that they would ultimately have to rely on the confluence of time and logistics, illustrate a completely conventional approach to warfare, at least according to the expectations of the times.

Strategically, the attack on Vetera has been viewed as "stupid" and "reckless."[58] This is especially the case if Civilis' uprising is viewed as another front in the civil war. No claims of allegiance to Vespasian could defend attacking a legionary fortress, even if it housed supporters of Vitellius. Hindsight certainly corroborates such a conclusion, but Civilis and his fellow insurgents did not have the benefit of seeing the future, or even of knowing the true condition of the Empire in late summer 69. Those who did claim clairvoyance, like Veleda or the druid priests mentioned above, proclaimed ultimate victory for the insurgents. Whatever the unknowable future held, what the insurgents did know was that they had achieved wild success since they first attacked Roman installations in Batavia in August. They knew that Vetera had barely enough men to provide an adequate defense, a sure sign, to them at least, of a failing empire.[59] Their conventional transition from indirect to direct warfare was therefore predicated upon the weakness of their opponent. But even beyond this traditional explanation of how protracted wars could develop, the unsettled political context in part motivated the decision to attack the Roman fort and to secure as much territory and power as possible in order to limit the potential of rivals. As noted above, Civilis' position within Batavian society was not secure, a fact that his rivalry with Labeo clearly illustrates.[60] Such a competitive environment alongside the need to secure power and resources also explains why Civilis ordered his forces to attack various areas in Belgica between the two assaults against

57 Tacitus could recognize quality when necessary: see, for example, his description of the eight Batavian cohorts, disciplined and warlike, marching through Bonna and destroying the undisciplined and terrified raw recruits (Tac. *Hist.* 4.20).

58 Lendering and Bosman (2012) 98.

59 Tacitus (*Hist.* 4.22) claims that only 5,000 men guarded the fort which had been designed for twice that many.

60 Cf. Lendering and Bosman (2012) 98. Claudius Labeo and Civilis were already at odds (Tac. *Hist.* 4.18); see also Flaig (1995) 59.

Vetera.[61] In other words, it was not only the condition of the principal opponent (Rome) that directed insurgent strategy, but also the multi-polar nature of the insurgency itself.

Buoyed and challenged by the success of his fellow insurgents, Julius Sabinus also made a bold gamble to expand his own power in the spring of 70. He ordered his supporters to call him "Caesar" and led his forces against the Sequani, a people who had remained loyal to Rome (Tac. *Hist.* 4.67). With this motley and inexperienced insurgent force, far from protracting the conflict, Sabinus' haste (*festinatum*, Tac. *Hist.* 4.67) sought to increase his own power through a decisive engagement; and so it was. The Sequani routed his Lingones and Sabinus faked his own suicide only to live another nine years, most of that time quite literally under a rock, until he was finally captured and executed by Vespasian.[62] Still, he illustrates the multi-polar nature of this insurgency. He, Civilis, Classicus, and even Tutor, were all fighting to overthrow Rome, but also for their own supremacy and their own position in the new world order that the disintegration of the Roman Empire engendered. The nature (and reality) of the power vacuum alongside the political structures of their various communities occasionally forced all of these warlords towards decisive engagements.

The Roman Response

Tacitus claims that Sabinus' defeat was the turning point of the war (Tac. *Hist.* 4.67). If not its actual cause, it was indeed the point at which the insurgency ceased to spread. For nine months, from August 69 through April 70, the insurgents were largely successful. After that, the full force of the Roman Empire inexorably moved against the insurgency. Among modern scholars, there is growing discomfort in defining strict principles of counterinsurgency, in part because although the state suppression of uprisings is historically ubiquitous, the cultures, and therefore methodologies of the agents so often differ.[63] For antiquity, the recognition of a clear strategy of counterinsurgency, as something different from the precepts of regular warfare, is even more difficult.

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61 Lendering and Bosman (2012) 99. Tac. *Hist.* 4.28 states that Civilis ordered the Ubii, and Treveri to be plundered as well as the Menapii and Morini in northern Gaul. Wellesley (2000) 179 views the campaign through a traditional lens, seeing it as an attempt to convince northern Gaul "to join the independence movement."

62 Tac. *Hist.* 5.67, Dio Cass. 66.3.2. Plutarch (Mor. *Amat.* 25) relates how after spending the better part of a decade living in a cave Sabinus and his wife were captured and executed.

63 Kilcullen (2012); Ucko (2012); see also Gat (2006) 631–37.

To quell the insurgency the Romans relied primarily on overwhelming force—an option that had hitherto been impossible because of the civil war. With Vespasian's power secured, the full might of Rome—or what was left of it—could be directed upon the insurgents. From Rome, Vespasian's general Mucianus organized an absolutely massive army composed of eight legions called from Italy, Britain and Spain.[64] Quintus Petilius Cerialis led them; a notoriously calm general, he relied more on perseverance and luck than strategy and discipline.[65] Although large armies could pose a logistical problem (as at Tac. *Hist.* 4.26), in this case the sheer volume of troops was beneficial. The Romans could now advance in force and still be able to leave a sufficient number of troops behind to guard supply lines. So unlike at the start of the insurgency, when Vocula had to diminish the defenses of Vetera in order to defend his supply convoys (see above), the Romans now had the capability to defend pacified territory and advance against the enemy at the same time.

Cerialis and the Romans also relied on a swift action to overwhelm the morale of the insurgents and the communities that supported them. Preparatory assaults came from Vindonissa and Raetia (Tac. *Hist.* 4.70). When Cerialis reached Mogontiacum in late April,[66] he was already eager to engage the enemy without delay (Tac. *Hist.* 4.71). Travelling west towards the capital of Belgica, Augusta Treverorum, the Romans immediately defeated Julius Tutor and his Treveran followers at Bingium, and then Julius Valentinus, and his army at Rigodulum (Tac. *Hist.* 4.70–71). Tutor managed to escape, but Valentinus was captured. Such displays of force—the immediate victories, the size of the Roman army, and the fervor of Cerialis—deflated the morale of the Treveri, a great number of whom dropped their weapons and fled (Tac. *Hist.* 4.70). Some of their leaders took refuge in those communities that had remained loyal to the Romans. According to Tacitus they did this *ut primi posuisse bellum viderentur* ("so that they would appear to be the first to have ceased hostilities," *Hist.* 4.70). Tacitus' portrayal of the insurgent leaders competing to illustrate their loyalty—as if their place in the surrender queue determined the seriousness of their support—perfectly illustrates how the patronage system upon which the Roman Empire was based made it relatively easy to switch sides, often without suffering much of a penalty.

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64 Tac. *Hist.* 4.68 gives the specific numbers, but the manuscript and the history are confused; Chilver and Townend (1985) 14–19. For the Romans' basic reliance on (at the very least the threat of) overwhelming violence, see Mattern (2010) 167, 178.

65 Tac. *Hist.* 4.77, 78, and 5.21.

66 See the timeline in Urban (1985) 104; the legions likely departed for the Rhine in late February or early March.

While Cerialis' bold and violent action pacified most of the Gauls (Tac. *Hist.* 4.71), he also sought to regain the loyalty of the local populations with both mercy or violence, depending upon the needs of the moment. At Augusta Treverorum, the home of Classicus and Tutor, Cerialis' soldiers were eager for vengeance, but the general refused their desire to punish the city (Tac. *Hist.* 4.72). He then addressed the assembled Treveri and Lingones and offered reconciliation, admittedly at the price of subservience to Rome. According to Tacitus, rather than *populi Romani virtutem armis adfirmavi* ("maintain the virtue of the Roman people with arms"), he would resort to diplomacy, *quoniam apud vos verba plurimum valent* ("since words greatly convince [them]," Tac. *Hist.* 4.73). As always, the historicity of the speech is not as important as the fact that Tacitus imagined that diplomacy could effectively, or at least partially, quell an insurgency. Cerialis' words also remind Tacitus' readers of the power of such speeches which were in large part responsible for the initiation and spread of the insurgency.

Elsewhere, Cerialis employed a more violent approach towards securing the loyalty of the local population. Near the very end of the conflict, with the insurgents hemmed in Batavian territory, Cerialis razed the farmlands and pastures of the locals while leaving untouched those properties supposedly owned by Civilis (Tac. *Hist.* 5.23). The threat and use of violence against civilians in order to turn them against their leaders was ubiquitous in ancient warfare.[67] By all means, such tactics could backfire, but in this case they were effectively developed alongside diplomatic outreach towards other Batavian leaders and their German allies (Tac. *Hist.* 5.24–5).[68]

Cerialis and the Romans, like the insurgents, relied on desertions and local political divisions to fragment and ultimately defeat the enemy. Claudius Labeo, Civilis' rival, offers a clear example of how the Romans attempted to benefit from internal divisions among the Batavians. Detained, rather than murdered, Labeo bribed his jailers, fled Germany in search of Roman allies, and persuaded the steadfastly loyal Vocula that he could convince "the better part of the community [of Batavians] to return to their Roman alliance," (Tac. *Hist.* 4.56). That he, or rather Tacitus, thought such a scheme even remotely possible illustrates the multi-polar and patronage-based nature of this insurgency. Yet granted a small force of infantry and cavalry, he "made no attempt against the Batavians, but drew some Nervii and Baetasii to arms,

67 Hannibal employed the tactic against Fabius Maximus at the height of the delayer's unpopularity (Livy 22.23). The Athenian Pericles expected the Spartan Archelaus to follow a similar plan (Plut. *Per.* 33).

68 Schmitz (2008) 132.

and stealthily (*furtim*) rather than in open war attacked the Canninefates and Marsaci," (Tac. *Hist.* 4.56). It is remarkable and emblematic of this conflict that Labeo essentially waged a guerrilla war against the insurgency. His furtive tactics included the seizure of important thoroughfares, including a bridge over the Mosa River (Tac. *Hist.* 4.66). When he finally met Civilis in battle, Labeo's troops deserted him. Tacitus claimed that the desertion was either the result of Civilis' daring entrance into the enemy camp or his negotiation skills (*Hist.* 4.66). The former reason indicates how the complexity of the insurgency could force audacious action, while the latter illustrates Civilis' continued ability to build a network of support. In either case, the flippant disregard for loyalty is noteworthy even if ubiquitous.

Of course, that support was only as strong as the insurgency's chances of success. With Roman forces driving the insurgents back towards their Batavian homeland, Civilis decided to make a stand near Vetera (Tac. *Hist.* 5.14). The ensuing battle lasted two days, thanks in part to the fact that the Batavians had flooded the battlefield. Finally, a Batavian deserter offered to guide a flanking force through the marshy fields (Tac. *Hist.* 5.18). Throughout the entire affair, continued support for the insurgency was directly connected to its potential for success. Self-interest, more than ideology, equally motivated the leaders and followers.

Mounting Roman success disintegrated Civilis' support among his fellow Batavians who resigned themselves to negotiating with Cerialis. Tacitus, channeling the defeated, could not help couching the insurgency's failure in colonial terms: *nec posse ab una natione totius orbis servitium depelli. Quid profectum caede et incendiis legionum nisi ut plures validioresque accirentur?* ("it was not possible for one nation to expel slavery from the entire world. What had the slaughter and burning of the legions achieved except the summoning of more numerous and stronger forces?" *Hist.* 5.25). The "inevitable" Roman victory, in this rendering, resulted from the confluence of the insurgents' impossible ideological undertaking and the Romans' massive martial resources. To be sure, numbers mattered, but perhaps the political context—the patronage based system of power—was more important. "Organizational fragmentation" dramatically undercut the insurgency's potential.[69] There was simply too much internal conflict and not enough ideological purity for the insurgents to succeed; or to put it another way, not everyone wanted the "freedom" Civilis was selling.[70]

69 Reno (2012) 163.

70 For insurgency bereft of ideology, see Reno (2003).

Lacking support, Civilis agreed to parley with Cerialis. Tacitus' surviving account ends in the midst of their negotiations (*Hist.* 5.26), so the insurgent leader's ultimate end is unknown.[71] It appears that the Batavians, with some slight modifications, returned to their former status as members of the imperial *auxilia*.[72] That they ended up where they started confirms the stubborn inertia of the patronage system upon which the Roman Empire was based and the difficulty of overthrowing it from the inside.

Conclusion

Like every other ancient author, the extent to which Tacitus reveals what really happened can, and should, be debated. It is, perhaps, more fruitful to emphasize what Tacitus thought happened. That his text can so readily reflect a sort of us-versus-them rebellion against Rome is a direct result of the fact that the Roman Empire survived and even flourished, that he was an imperialist, and that a bifurcated understanding of insurgency has dominated much of the modern scholarship considering the affair. But Tacitus' text reveals that he could imagine a conflict that was very different from the ones the Romans traditionally faced. In the midst of a Roman civil war, when and where it was believed that Roman authority was already collapsing, if not completely vacant, Gaius Julius Civilis was one of many individuals, and the Batavians he led were one of many groups, interested in securing power in their traditional homelands. Various German and Gallic communities also joined the insurgency. The insurgents employed various tactics of indirect warfare, including terror, desertion, assassination, propaganda and attacks on logistical networks that appear to have challenged Roman expectations about how war should be fought. Although such tactics were of paramount importance the multi-polar nature of the insurgency forced the insurgents to rely upon direct engagements and indiscriminant violence as a way to gain and maintain wavering political support. The extent to which this really should have surprised Romans can be debated. After all, the same asymmetrical warfare must have occurred in Rome's wars of conquest. Likewise the Roman response—based largely on the principle of overwhelming force buttressed by diplomatic engagement—differed little from Rome's traditional methods of expansion.

71 Lendering and Bosman (2012) 105 suggest that he probably did not survive very long, either the Romans or even his fellow Batavians (as had happened to Arminius) seeking vengeance.

72 Willems and Van Enckevort (2009) 23; Schmitz (2008) 132; Van Driel-Murray (2003) 212.

When we recognize that insurgency is a fluid term, when it is not used as a simple synonym for revolt, the concept can force reassessment of prevailing theories about internal violence and can offer a much more nuanced explanation of events that avoids undue focus on a single ideological motivation. One benefit of re-interpreting the "so-called Batavian revolt" as a sort of Rhenish insurgency is that it explains all the deceit and double-crosses presented in Tacitus without requiring the invention of an historiographical conspiracy. Tacitus, imperialist that he was, did not have the precise vocabulary to describe what had happened, but until recently, neither did modern scholars who were tied to bifurcated definitions of insurgency. Secondly, this patronage based model helps explain why some challenges to centralized authority could occur and why they ultimately failed.[73] The patronage based imperial system promoted political fragmentation, especially during periods of crisis such as the Year of the Four Emperors. Such divisions, then, were both the cause and cure of violent competitive outbursts like the Rhenish insurgency.[74]

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73 On the inevitability of uprisings against Rome and their ultimate ends, see Woolf (2011) 44.

74 See Mattern (2010). My thanks to Lee L. Brice, Tim Howe, Paul Johstono, and colleagues at Portland State University for their helpful comments on various drafts.

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CHAPTER 11

Gallic Insurgencies? Annihilating the Bagaudae

J. Grant Couper

Introduction

Revolt, uprising and violence were facts of life in Roman Gaul, as in many other provinces, but later Roman Gaul is notorious for people labeled "Bagaudae."[1] Their notoriety has little relation to their significance, as they appear to have affected the course of history little, if at all. However, they have caused scholarly controversy out of all proportion to their putative significance.[2] On the face of it, the subject should present few difficulties. There are copious sources available to us, but the lack of detail in these sources has led some scholars to fill in the gaps in our knowledge with certain assumptions, one of which is that the Bagaudae formed an insurgency of some sort. However, although we can characterize them as terroristic insofar as their actions would have caused terror to civilian populations, the Bagaudae cannot be classified as insurgents in the sense of a coherent movement that aimed to effect clearly formulated socio-political changes through violence.

This is a point of view which has been gaining ground in more recent years. Modern studies of the Bagaudae can generally be characterized as more conservative in their treatment of the evidence than their predecessors.[3] This conservative movement, to which this chapter owes much, has generally sought to ascertain which sources can be safely taken as referring to the Bagaudae, and which are to be excluded from the field. It tends to emphasize the limitations of the sources more than some previous attempts, which tried to fit the evi-

1 Dyson (1971); (1975). Pekáry (1987) has a comprehensive and fully referenced list of revolts in the Roman Empire up to the end of the second century. I use "Bagaudae" because it is the most commonly used term in the scholarship; however, I accept Minor's argument that "Bacaudae" is the older form, Minor 1996. Except where noted, all dates in this chapter are CE.

2 See the bibliography at the end of the chapter; Cf. Minor (1997) 167; Sánchez León (1996a) has collected and translated many of the sources for the Bagaudae. Rubin (1995) and Minor's series of articles provide a good guide to the debates about the Bagaudae, as does the article by Badot and De Decker (1992); Sánchez León (1996b) is a comprehensive treatment of the subject, with an excellent bibliography.

3 See *inter alia* Okamura (1988); Rubin (1995); Sánchez León (1996a); (1996b); Larrea (1998); Drinkwater (1984); (1989); (1992); (1999); and Minor's articles.

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dence into particular theoretical models, leading to interpretations that were complete, but sometimes quite fanciful.

The central question of the study of the Bagaudae is, "who were the Bagaudae?" This deceptively simple question has been tackled by many eminent scholars, but few undisputable conclusions have been arrived at. In order to elucidate the problem, we will first examine Gallic rebellions up to the third century, then discuss scholarly approaches to the Bagaudae.[4] From there we will ask the conventional questions of the evidence, namely why the Bagaudae were called Bagaudae, where they were found, what they did, and what people thought of them, in order to demonstrate that the Bagaudae were not an insurgency and to explore the implications of this.

This chapter is not intended to be a comprehensive survey of the subject, but an examination of the difficulties of defining the Bagaudae and the implications for the study of the Bagaudae and for the study of insurgency and terrorism generally. Limitations of space mean that scholars' intricate and rigorous arguments will be treated with some violence, which is regrettable but necessary. The intention here is to demonstrate how the most crucial pieces of evidence on which their arguments stand are unreliable rather than to refute them point by point.

Rebellions in Gaul

A number of rebellions have been attested in Gaul during the period between the first and the third centuries. Most of these uprisings were dismissed by those who recorded them as being of little importance, for instance, the revolt of the Treveri and some other tribes in 29 BCE (Cass. Dio 51.20.5), quarrels between Gallic and Germanic communities in 19 BCE (Cass. Dio 54.11.1), general unrest in Gallia Comata in 16–15 BCE (Suet. *Tib.* 9), and more serious conflict in 21 with the affair of Florus and Sacrovir (Tac. *Ann.* 3.40–46). Much of this can be explained as the response of colonized societies to the Roman Empire, as Gallic communities suffered from the violence of the Roman conquest and its aftermath. Subsequently there was little trouble until 69, when various members of provincial elites took advantage of Roman preoccupation with civil wars to stage revolts.[5] Some of the conflict was intra-provincial, when rival communities sought to attack one another as Vienne and Lugdunum did (Tac. *Hist.* 1.65). Some of these conflicts were of a sort less commonly seen in

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4 Basic dates and other information are set out in Table 1.

5 See Turner, chapter nine, this volume.

the western provinces, particularly the appearance of a charismatic tribesman named Mariccus. Previously an ordinary Boian tribesman, he declared himself *adsertor Galliarum et deus* ("a liberator of Gaul, and a god") and led his followers in a revolt which only ended when he was captured by an Aeduan militia and fed to animals for public entertainment (Tac. *Hist*. 2.61). This has been variously explained as the result of insanity on Mariccus' part, combined with discontented druids, a peasant revolt, and a violent response to Roman imperialism as part of a revitalization movement.[6]

Mariccus' revolt is unusual in the context of most provincial revolts in that Tacitus was unable to explain it in terms of provincial discontent caused by over-burdensome obligations to the Roman state, or Roman corruption.[7] Instead, Tacitus describes it in terms of a local revolt that was destroyed by a local militia with Roman reinforcements, its members having terrorized (implied by the use of *trahebat*) the countryside of the Aedui. Tacitus describes the participants in the revolt as a *fanaticam multitudinem*, a violent mob led astray by a treasonous fraud of low social status.[8] Mariccus claimed to be *adsertor Galliarum*, so it is possible that he unsuccessfully attempted to unite a number of tribes. However, Tacitus evinces contempt instead of attempting to probe the motivations that drove Mariccus and his followers to rebel.[9]

After the conflagration of 69, Gaul was mainly peaceful until 185–186, when a figure named Maternus appeared (*SHA Comm*. 16; Herodian 1.10.1–7). According to Herodian he was a deserter who gained a following of fellow deserters and bandits, hence the name the *SHA* gives it: *bellum desertorum* ("war of the deserters"). His followers grew in strength to the point where they were able to attack cities in Gaul and Spain. He also made an attempt on Commodus' life, which led to the capture and execution of the bandit leader after he was betrayed by some of his followers.[10] While much of this is difficult to believe, and its historical veracity has been attacked, it seems likely that Maternus was the inspiration for, and widely credited with, an outbreak of banditry in the western Roman Empire, the best-known bandit leader among many.[11] Thompson's theory that Maternus had the broad support of the

6 Bowersock (1986) 311; Rostovtzeff (1957) 348; *contra* Morgan (1993) 770–1; Webster (1999).
7 MacMullen (1966) 214.
8 Morgan (1993) 770–6.
9 Walbank (1972) 163–4.
10 See Grünewald (2004) 124–36 on the literary aspects of Maternus' revolt.
11 See Grünewald (2004) 132–3; a more positive interpretation can be found in Linderski (2003).

peasantry and was as a result able to fight the Roman state for years is problematic. Deserters like Maternus and his followers would have possessed military expertise unavailable to civilians and as such would have been able to evade capture and enjoy a measure of success against the Roman state.[12] He would have been able to extort resources from peasants if necessary and cannot be regarded as a forerunner of the Bagaudae, a point which will be revisited.

Modern Perspectives

Academics have expended a great deal of effort on the Bagaudae and the approaches taken have been many and varied.[13] For Bowman the Bagaudae were, rather prosaically, "rural brigands" in Gaul and Spain.[14] This ignores the problem of terminology: as Minor points out, the sources refer to bandits *and* Bagaudae.[15] This distinction could be attributed to the carelessness or ignorance of our sources, but it is a distinction which appears repeatedly, as do references to their origins in the countryside.

Nationalistic theories, which lay a great deal of emphasis on the part played by "natives" in Bagaudic actions and claim that the Bagaudae were a manifestation of nationalism in Gaul and Spain, have enjoyed some support.[16] These interpretations are problematic insofar as they tend to assume a unified cultural identity as well as politically and culturally motivated antipathy to the Roman Empire on the part of the insurgents, none of which can be shown to have been the case. This has inspired some fanciful responses, with some dramatic depictions of the Bagaudae as Celtic nationalists struggling against an oppressive invader—here, the Bagaudae represent the French and the Roman Empire, the Prussians.[17] The Bagaudae in Spain have been interpreted

12 Thompson (1952); Okamura (1988) 289.

13 The bibliography on the subject is vast and varied. See Sánchez-León (1996a); (1996b) for comprehensive bibliography. Sánchez-León (1996a) 13 gives an overview of the strands of scholarly thinking on the Bagaudae.

14 Bowman (2005) 70.

15 Minor (1997) 179.

16 For instance, Sirago (1961) 378 and to a certain extent Barbero and Vigil (1965) 292–8; see also Bouvier-Ajam (1984) for a nationalistic approach to the Bagaudae and their role in French history. For an excellent summary and discussion, see Sánchez León (1996a) 13, and Larrea (1998) 136.

17 See Sánchez León (1996b) 109–20 for an account of the reception of the Bagaudae from the eighteenth century onwards.

as "Vascon" nationalists, similarly fighting to assert their right to sovereignty in the face of imperialist oppression.[18] Certainly insurgents and criminals survive thanks to local support and they do appear in regions marginal to the Roman world. However, the evidence used to demonstrate the existence of "breakaway Bagaudic regions" (chiefly the *Querolus*) is intensely problematic, not least because it does not mention the Bagaudae by name. Alleged Bagaudic efforts to overthrow the Roman imperial régime are similarly not attested in the sources. While the name (Tibatto) of one of the leaders of Bagaudae is certainly non-Roman, that in itself does not necessarily imply hostility to the Roman state.

These nationalist interpretations provoked a reaction: MacMullen argued that the Bagaudae represented a local self-help movement of discontented peasants which aimed to protect itself in volatile times, rather than an assertion of incipient nationalist feeling. Thus for him, it was a rejection of Roman mismanagement rather than a rejection of Romanness itself.[19] This is certainly a more nuanced view than the nationalistic school and he correctly points out that there is no evidence of any kind of nationalist self-consciousness at this point in the history of Gaul. However, his position is based on the assumption that these rebels attempted to set up separate self-ruled "Bagaudic zones," particularly in Armorica. These zones were the logical conclusion of Gallic separatist tendencies whose manifestations MacMullen identifies from the first century onwards. For him, this separatism was rooted initially in the desire to protect local interests from interference by the Roman state, and the failure of the Roman state to protect local interests from the third century onwards caused a strengthening of separatist sentiment. This assumption of separatist goals is hard to sustain, because while Bagaudae seem to have been identified as belonging to certain regions (such as the Alps, or parts of Spain) by our sources, there is no evidence that they actually attempted to set up self-governed districts, even in Armorica. The evidence on which the separatist theory is based, the *Querolus*, is simply too ambiguous and unclear, and furthermore does not specifically mention the Bagaudae.

E. A. Thompson takes a Marxist approach to the Bagaudae, maintaining that they were a peasant movement with revolutionary aims, with roots that

18 See Larrea (1998) 136 for an overview; also Barbero and Vigil (1965) 292–8, and Sánchez Léon (1996b).

19 MacMullen (1966) especially 211–5; for a critique of separatist theories see Minor (2000).

extended back to the revolt of Maternus in 186.[20] He argues that Bagaudae were active in the fourth century, drawing on Ammianus' mentions of bandits as evidence for Bagaudae, and linking them with the *Querolus* and the poems of Rutilius Namatianus and Flavius Merobaudes to paint a picture of an ongoing insurgency which possessed revolutionary social aims, intending nothing less than the overthrow of the Roman state. Apart from the problems with using these writers as sources for the Bagaudae, particularly the fact that none of them actually mentions the Bagaudae, Thompson makes the mistake of projecting a unified class consciousness onto peasants; in reality, this tends not to be found in peasant societies.[21] This runs against his assumption that the Bagaudae were peasants who possessed a group consciousness and a program of social revolution. Thompson's grasp of the scholarship and the scope of his work are impressive and his books and articles on the subject are still a comprehensive and scholarly introduction to it. Unfortunately, he is too prone to crediting Bagaudae with actions with which the sources do not associate them. As a result, his interpretation sees the Bagaudae practically everywhere, all of the time, in late Roman Gaul and Spain.[22]

The theory that the Bagaudae were peasant revolutionaries conducting an insurgency has been a popular one, and it suffers from problematic assumptions similar to those underpinning nationalistic theories of the Bagaudae.[23] The evidence used to support this view of the Bagaudae as revolutionary peasants is likewise debatable. The economic problems of the late Roman period are emphasized as central to the appearance of the Bagaudae, which certainly seems a fair point. However, the motivations of the Bagaudae are assumed to be anti-imperialist and indeed anti-Roman, drawing on the non-Roman name of Tibatto and the apparently localized nature of Bagaudic groups. Drawing on the evidence of the *Querolus* and Salvian, areas ruled by the Bagaudae are again hypothesized, and the economic grievances attributed by the sources to the Bagaudae are taken as both cause and aim. Generally these interpretations combine the "class conflict" and "separatist/nationalist" hypotheses, and suffer from the weakness of both as adumbrated above.

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20 Thompson (1952) 15; De Ste Croix (1981) 479. Thompson further sets out his position in Thompson (1956a); (1956b); (1977); (1982a); (1982b); (1984). See also the critiques in Drinkwater (1984): Rubin (1995) 131–43. The most thorough critique of Thompson's theories can be found in Minor's series of articles (1997–2010).

21 Minor (1997) 175–6; Drinkwater (1984).

22 Drinkwater (1999) 287.

23 See for instance Barbero and Vigil (1965); Gagé (1964) 404–17; Wickham (2005) 530–2.

Van Dam's analysis envisions the Bagaudae as a "reformist" movement rather than a revolutionary one, with peasants seeking to strengthen their relationships with local elites in order to gain greater security in periods of distress caused by invasions, civil war and high taxes.[24] However, he relies on his interpretation of *tyrannous* as "usurpers," as the Bagaudae were defined by Paeanius, pointing to the large number of usurpers who were to be found in Gaul in late antiquity. As noted by Minor, *tyrannous* in this context does not necessarily mean usurpers and this is the only time that leaders of the Bagaudae are referred to as *tyrannous*, so Amandus and Aelianus cannot be shown to have been usurpers.[25] Sánchez León has demonstrated that the coins attributed to Amandus and Aelianus, a crucial part of Van Dam's argument that they were usurpers, cannot be accepted as genuine.[26] Moreover, the other Gallic usurpers Van Dam refers to, such as Carausius, were leaders of regular military forces. Conversely, the Bagaudae do not seem to have been anything other than irregular in terms of their organization. Certainly they seem to have been dangerous to unprepared civilians, but the Bagaudae who were confronted with well-organized troops in Gaul and Spain lost every time. Although he believes that the links between Gallic elites and their followers became closer as the political and economic situation in the provinces became more desperate, more like pre-conquest Gaul, there is nothing to show that the Bagaudae were effective fighters. Van Dam's analysis is impressive and marks an important change of direction in the study of the Bagaudae, but ultimately it does not stand up to scrutiny.[27]

More recently the historiography of the Bagaudae has taken a conservative turn, with an emphasis on a stricter reading of the source material. Drinkwater's critical view of Thompson's and Van Dam's hypotheses culminated in his suggestion that the meaning of "Bagaudae" changed over time. Initially referring to desperate peasants who turned to anyone who could offer them security, it came to mean violent criminals or bandits, then finally it referred to rebels who resisted Roman attempts to reimpose imperial control over areas of Gaul which had been lost in the disorder and violence of the later western Roman Empire.[28] This interpretation relies on Salvian's claim that people, including the well-to-do and the poor, fled from predatory Roman officials to barbarians

24 Van Dam (1985) 27, 29; and Minor's critique of Van Dam's hypothesis in Minor (1997); (2002); also Drinkwater's critique of Van Dam (1985) in Drinkwater (1989).

25 Minor (1997) 173–4; Drinkwater (1989) 198. See LSJ, 1836, and Lampe (1961) 1421.

26 Sánchez León (1996a) appendix 2; Minor (1997) 171–2.

27 Drinkwater (1989); (1992); Minor (1997); (1999); (2002).

28 Drinkwater (1984); (1989); (1992).

and Bagaudae, which in Drinkwater's interpretation means that the latter must have effectively ruled territories (although Drinkwater rightly notes that the evidence given by the *Querolus* and Rutilius Namatianus is not relevant to the Bagaudae). However, it is not clear to me that this is what Salvian's statement meant. Salvian could equally have been referring to mobile groups of Bagaudae roaming around the western provinces, largely free from state control. Minor has strongly criticized Drinkwater's position that the meaning of the term "Bagaudae" changes over time, as well as his theory that the Bagaudae controlled areas independent from the Roman state.[29] As Minor points out, Drinkwater's reconstruction is plausible but the evidence that underpins it is insufficient. Rubin offers a strong critique of views of the Bagaudae as a coherent, self-aware mass movement.[30] Sánchez León's recent works on the sources for the Bagaudae, the analysis of these sources, and the reception of the Bagaudae in their own time and afterwards, have made important contributions to the study of the field.[31] The consensus is generally that the Bagaudae formed a *jacquerie*, a peasant rebellion that expressed violent discontent rather than having any grand revolutionary aims.[32]

What all of these works, including Minor's series of articles, have in common is their assumption that "Bagaudae" is a label applied by many different parties to a particular phenomenon or particular phenomena, which can be perceived through careful readings of the sources.[33] There is, then, a fundamental optimism to their efforts and an attempt to approach the subject without preconceptions. This is not to say that these efforts are beyond criticism. Sánchez León bases a great deal of his interpretations of the Bagaudae upon the evidence of the *Querolus* and the *Vita de Sancti Martini*, which are of dubious value. Minor's articles should be considered essential reading, as they provide an extended and in-depth critique of the sources and the scholarship, but they do not (as yet) form as complete an overview of the subject as Sánchez León's work and as is often the case with an extended series of articles, a broader view of the subject can be hard to discern. There seems to be, more or less, a consensus now that the Bagaudae formed a socially heterogeneous movement with the overall goal of freedom from misrule and violence (albeit whose individual members may have had varied motivations), which was probably rooted ultimately in socio-economic breakdown in the western provinces during the

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29 Minor (1999) 38–9; Minor (2010) 136–43.

30 Rubin (1995).

31 Sánchez León (1996a); (1996b).

32 See Wickham (2006) 529–33.

33 Although Drinkwater (1999) 288 seems to be moving in a less optimistic direction.

later centuries of the Roman Empire. There are still some battles to be fought over the relevance of different sources, but progress has been made and much of the excess, "speculative" source material has been dropped from the study of the Bagaudae.

Etymologies of "Bagaudae"

There has been a great deal of argument over the label "Bagaudae."[34] None of the sources from antiquity give the derivation of the word, but some hypotheses have been advanced. On the basis that "Bagaudae" was a term applied by Celtic-speaking Gallic provincials (*per* Aurelius Victor *Caes*. 39.17–19), who were mainly Celtic-speaking at this time, it has been suggested that the root of "Bagaudae" is *bág*, a Celtic word meaning "fight," added to an ending that may indicate a tribal name. However, no tribe with that name has been attested in Gallic history at any stage.[35]

Bagaudae has also been linked with the Latin *vagus*, meaning "wandering," possibly indicating that they were an itinerant community of some sort, or perhaps people made rootless by the civil wars and barbarian invasions of the later Roman period. Links have been made with the *Alaudae*, the legion of the *Alaudae* of the first century BCE, or with the Bacchantes (Sigebert of Gembloux, *De Passio Sanctorum Thebeorum* 1.50–108). There are echoes of *bagat* (an Armorican word, meaning assembly), hinting at a violent or lawless throng.[36] It has been suggested that "Bagaudae" may have signified forest-dwellers, or the name of a region associated with the Bagaudae, or a Mauretanian tribe called the Baquates, or that it was derived from the Hebrew *Boguedim* (rebels), or hill-men, or nomads who lived in tents, or peasants obliged to pay heavy taxes, or bandits.[37] These suggestions range from the ingenious to the strange, but the consensus for some time has been that "Bagaudae" refers to fighters.

There is a hint that the Bagaudae may have been connected with the Vargi, who are mentioned by Sidonius Apollinaris in connection with the violent kidnapping and sale of a woman while she was travelling in Gaul. He claims that *vargi* is the term for the bandits of the Auvergne (Sidonius Apollinaris,

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34 Most studies on the subject offer a discussion of the etymology of the term. Recent works such as Badot and De Decker (1992); Minor (1996); Sánchez León (1996a); (1996b) examine the possible etymologies of the term in depth.

35 Minor (1996) 298; see also Minor (1975).

36 Minor (1996) 298–9; Sánchez León (1996a) 134–6. See the *OLD* 2: 2209–10.

37 Badot and De Decker (1992) 330–43 gives an excellent overview.

Ep. 6.4).[38] *Vargus* is found in Germanic literature such as law codes, where the term appears to mean "outlaw"; it is also the word for "wolf" and has overtones of being an outcast.[39] Any connection between *vargi* and Bagaudae seems to find little support among academics.[40] In light of the association between Bagaudae and barbarians by the *Panegyrici* and Salvian, at a time when Germanic tribesmen were periodically invading the Roman provinces, it may have been that the provincial inhabitants of Gaul used a Germanic word to describe individuals who behaved like Germanic invaders, wandering and looting the countryside with occasional raids on towns—but perhaps this is too fanciful.

More recently, Minor has cogently argued that the more popular term "Bagaudae" should be replaced with "Bacaudae," as the latter term is used in the earliest manuscripts which contain the word. "Bagaudae" only appears in manuscripts from the ninth or tenth century onwards while "Bacaudae" appears in manuscripts from the fifth century onwards. The Greek sources for the Bagaudae, Zosimus and Paeanius, use kappa rather than gamma, indicating that the hard *c* sound appears in the earliest forms of the name. It should be noted that in the post-Roman period, particularly the sixth and seventh centuries, the personal name of "Bacauda" is found, not "Bagauda."[41] However, the etymology of "Bacaudae" is difficult to discern, which leaves us at square one; we still have no clear idea what "Bacaudae" meant to Celtic-speaking provincials. It often seems that this pattern is the case with studying the Bagaudae—every time a step forward is taken we find that much of what we thought we knew is inaccurate.

Geography of the Bagaudae

Armorica is a location heavily associated with the Bagaudae. It has been inferred that Maximian would have dealt with the Bagaudae in conjunction with Carausius' campaign against pirates on the northwestern Gallic coast.[42] At least some of the Bagaudae that Maximian dealt with were to be found around Trier (*Pan. Lat*. 10.4.3).[43] There are references to uprisings in *Gallia Ultima*

38 See the explanatory note in Callander Murray (2000) 231.

39 Drew (1991) 188; Jacob (2000) 1043; see Niles (2003) 1129 for similar terms in Old English.

40 Badot and De Decker (1992) 329–30; Minor (2010) 139.

41 Minor (1996) 300–4.

42 Sánchez León (1996) 72; see also Woods (2001) arguing that Amandus was a pirate leader.

43 Minor (1997) 174–5.

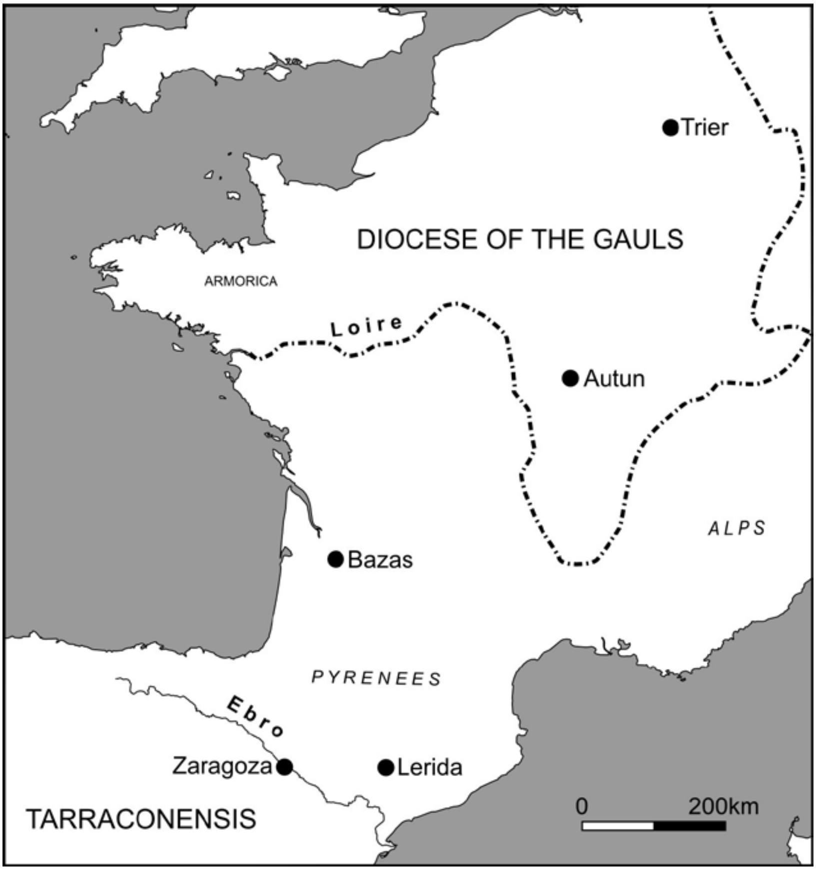


FIGURE 11.1 *Important sites during the Bagaudae episodes in Hispania and Gaul.*

(Further Gaul) and the Alpine regions of Gaul which our sources explicitly connect with the Bagaudae (see below).[44] Other references to revolts in Armorica, and social conflict at Bazas in 414, have been used to infer that Armorica and western Gaul were important locations for the Bagaudae. However, the written sources do not connect the events in Bazas and Armorica explicitly with the Bagaudae.[45] Similarly the *Querolus*, which mentions a society apparently free from Roman law located in the Loire valley, does not explicitly refer to the Bagaudae either and there is no reason to connect it with the Bagaudae at all.[46] Hydatius refers to Bagaudae in Spain, in Tarraconensis, around Tarazona and

44 Minor (1999) 39–40; Minor (2002) 106–10.

45 See Bartholomew (1982) especially 263–8.

46 Minor (2000) 88–92.

Zaragoza. Beyond placing Bagaudae in northern Gaul and northern Spain, we are at a loss. We are told that they attacked cities in Gaul, but none are named. Any named Gallic cities that were attacked in this period cannot be shown to have been attacked by Bagaudae.[47] Geographically, then, we are mainly left with a vague impression of Bagaudae operating in northern or northwestern Gaul, and at a later date in more specific locations in northern Spain.

TABLE 1 *Timeline of the Bagaudae*[48]

269/70—Attack on Autun

285–286—Bagaudic revolt in Gaul, suppressed by Maximian[49]

365–366—Minor conflicts in Gaul

369—Banditry in Gaul

407—Sarus, a general of Stilicho, is driven back by Constantius. He encounters the Bagaudae near the Alps and gives them all of his loot in exchange for safe passage to Italy

409—Armorican and British rebellions

414—Slaves and youths plan to kill the elites of Bazas during a siege by the Visigoths

417—Exuperantius ends uprising in Armorica

435–437—Revolt of Tibatto in Further Gaul

441—Bagaudae massacred in Tarraconensis

443—More Bagaudae killed in Spain

448—Flight of Eudoxius to the Huns. *Majorian defends Tours from attack*

449—Bagaudae led by Basilius kill soldiers at Tarazona. Rechiarius (Suevic general) and Basilius loot the countryside around Zaragoza, and attack Lerida

452–3—Frederic massacres Bagaudae in Tarraconensis

47 Sánchez Léon (1996b) 19.

48 Key: dates and events in italics are some of the incidents attributed by scholars to the Bagaudae, but where the Bagaudae are not explicitly referred to in the sources. A comprehensive list of such incidents is available in Sánchez León (1996b) 19.

49 Bagaudae are not referred to explicitly in the *Panegyric* (10.4), but Aurelius Victor's testimony makes it highly likely that the peasant rebels described by the panegyricist are Bagaudae.

The Bagaudae of 285–286

The only contemporary source on the Bagaudae of 285–286, the *Panegyric* (delivered in 291), does not refer explicitly to the Bagaudae.[50] Rather, the *Panegyric* describes the rebels in terms associated with the countryside, such as *agricolae, aratores, pastores* and *rustici* (farmers, arable farmers, herdsmen, countrymen), comparing their destruction of farms to the behavior of a *hostem barbarum* (barbarian enemy) (*Pan. Lat*. 10.4.3–4). Despite the lack of an explicit reference to Bagaudae, it is highly probable that this does refer to the Bagaudae as later sources attribute disturbances in this region at this time to Bagaudae, whom all of the sources state include peasants. Aurelius Victor portrays the insurrectionists of 285–286 as *agrestes* and *latrones* (countrymen and robbers) (*Caes*. 39.17–19), Eutropius characterizes them as *rusticani* and *agrestes* (rustics and countrymen) (9.20.3), and Orosius tells us that they were *rusticani* (rustics) (7.25.2).[51] According to Aurelius these rebels were termed Bagaudae by Gallic provincials; Eutropius states that they designated themselves Bacaudae; Orosius says that their leaders gave them the label of Bagaudae. All of these sources were written in the mid-fourth or early fifth century, some time after the revolt had taken place. Making matters more difficult is our lack of knowledge of our sources' original source material. It may well have been the *Kaisergeschichte*, but it was not necessarily the sole original source for the Bagaudae. Eutropius and Paeanius drew on Aurelius' account and Orosius in turn drew on Eutropius, so while the line of transmission of the available information is quite clear, it is unknown whence our sources drew their material.[52] Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Orosius, and the *Passion of St. Maurice* among other sources tell us that Amandus and Aelianus were the leaders of the Bagaudae so this part of the tradition is well established.

The general impression left by the first appearance of the Bagaudae in the sources is that they were low-status provincials from the countryside, who were led by two individuals whose names were known to our sources, and who were therefore notorious. Peanius' Greek translation of Eutropius defines the Bagaudae as *tyrannous … epikhorious* (9.20.3). The latter term has been translated by Van Dam as "native usurpers" but as Minor points out it could also mean "native (or rural) rebels," or indeed "tyrants of the countryside." In any

50 See Thompson (1952); Van Dam (1985); Rubin (1995); Drinkwater (1989) for fairly wide-ranging histories of the Bagaudae; Minor (1997) and Drinkwater (1984) deal more narrowly with the period 285–286; all contain useful and important analyses of the Bagaudae.

51 Minor (1997) 168–70; Minor (2002) 113. See the *OLD*, 100–1, 175, 1438–9, 1842–3.

52 Sánchez León (1996a) 28–42.

case, Peanius refers to the Bagaudae as a whole, rather than their leaders, so "usurpers" is probably not the intended sense, and no source characterizes any individual associated with the Bagaudae as a usurper. The coins which have been attributed to Amandus and Aelianus, usually taken as evidence that they were usurpers, are no longer thought to have been genuinely issued by them.[53]

The *Panegyric* does not refer to Aelius and Amandus, probably because Maximian wanted the issue to be treated in a cursory manner (10.4.4). His disinclination to dwell on this particular episode fits in with what we know of the Bagaudae from other sources: they were seen as low-status and therefore this was a revolt that was thought to be of little significance. Maximian had little incentive to inflate the victory or gloss over the disreputable nature of Bagaudae.[54] It is tempting to see this as part of a strategy designed to "forget" the rebels, but it is much more likely that Maximian simply preferred his panegyricists to remind everyone that he had brought peace to Gaul, without being seen to dwell unduly on a victory over an unimpressive enemy. The Bagaudae seem to have posed no threat to imperial power; they attacked cities, but there is no evidence that the Bagaudae attempted or wished to govern them (Aur. Vict. *Caes*. 39.17). As far as the Roman state was concerned, the Bagaudae were a tiresome inconvenience.[55]

The *Panegyric* indicates that Maximian did not subdue the Gallic rebels by solely military means; rather, he is depicted as having persuaded some to surrender, linked by implication to his display of mercy (10.4.3, 11.5.3, 7.8.3). As Nixon and Rodgers note there is an implication that the provincials suffered unfair treatment, but this is attributed to conditions that supposedly no longer pertained at the time that the panegyric was delivered.[56] The hint that some peasants had rebelled in response to intolerable conditions locates the cause of the revolt within the Roman administration. It identifies the rebels as reactive rather than pro-active and robs them of independent agency, which is unsurprising in a work designed to promote the power of the imperial regime. Thus the revolt is presented neatly by the sources: it started because of imperial neglect and ended because of imperial attention.

53 Van Dam (1985) 30; Minor (1997) 171–3 and n. 23; and Sánchez León (1996a) appendix 2. See LSJ 674, 1836, and Lampe (1961) 1420–1.

54 Minor (1997) 175.

55 Minor (1997) 181.

56 Nixon and Rodgers (1994) 201 n. 28.

A Fourth-Century Hiatus?

It has been argued by E. A. Thompson that Ammianus' mentions of violence in the mid-fourth century referred to the Bagaudae (365–366: 27.2.11; 369: 28.2.10).[57] However, Ammianus mentions a number of battles he regards as inconsequential in 365–366 and refers to widespread *latrocinium* (banditry) in Gaul in 369, but does not indicate that Bagaudae were involved in any of these episodes of violence. It is possible that this refers to Bagaudae but there is nothing to indicate that this was necessarily the case. The passage could only refer to Bagaudae if banditry is synonymous with the Bagaudae. However, this argument fails to convince, since there is no evidence that banditry was necessarily equated with the Bagaudae in this period.[58]

Two mid-fourth century sources, Aurelius Victor and Eutropius, refer to the Bagaudae of 285–286, which indicates that Bagaudae may have been found in the fourth century. Aurelius tells us that *Bagaudae* is what provincials call (*vocant*) peasant rebels and bandits (39.17). The use of the present tense may indicate that there were still people labeled Bagaudae in Gaul, and that the usage of the word had not changed.[59] However, it is equally possible that our sources were simply careless of any possible changes in usage and repeated the term because they found it in the course of their research.

It is certainly possible that the Bagaudae were not mentioned in the sources between 286 and the fifth century because the imperial *idée reçue* held that they had been exterminated. A similar situation pertained after Augustus claimed to have exterminated the pirates of the Mediterranean (*RG* 25.1): it was claimed by ancient authors and some modern scholars that up to the end of the second century, piracy in the Mediterranean did not recur after Augustus' crackdown (for example Philo *Leg*. 145–146).[60] This was an important part of imperial ideology, linked to the imposition of peace, and served to associate the emperors with mythical figures who had destroyed brigands and pirates, such as Theseus and Minos, and significant historical figures like Alexander.[61] Braund argues that piracy in the Mediterranean continued throughout the Principate and beyond but that it was too limited in its effects to draw the attention of imperial elites, who continued to claim that it no longer existed. Perhaps a similar motivation lies behind the sources' silence on the Bagaudae

57 Thompson (1952) 19–21; *contra* Minor (1999) 32.

58 See Minor (2010) 139.

59 Minor (1999) 36–7.

60 Braund (1993) 199–204 gives further examples and a fuller discussion.

61 See De Souza (2008) for the ideology of emperors as peacemakers.

in the fourth century. As we have seen, Ammianus mentions banditry but this does not necessarily refer to Bagaudae.

Bagaudae in Fifth Century Gaul

Zosimus' reference to the Bagaudae in 407 (6.2.5) is the next explicit mention of the Bagaudae in the historical sources. A general named Sarus encountered some Bagaudae in the region of the Alps; since he was retreating in an effort to avoid Constantius III's forces, he had to give up some of his baggage train to these Bagaudae and in return they let him and his forces pass into Italy. However, the exact location of these Bagaudae is unclear. Zosimus may mean that they were found in the Alps, or near the Alps. This episode raises some difficult problems: these Bagaudae probably did not suddenly appear ready to interfere with an imperial army. It seems likely that they had been active for some time previously in the area, but for how long is unknown. Furthermore, it raises questions as to the nature of their activity. It is possible that they were Gallic bandits, or peasant rebels, but little else can be determined. Their appearance in 407 is probably linked to civil war, as in 285–286, but what they hoped to accomplish is unclear, apart from short-term self-enrichment. It has often been speculated that the appearance of these Bagaudae indicates ongoing subversive activities, and even the existence of areas controlled by the Bagaudae for significant periods of time. However, we know too little to support even indirectly such conjectures. This episode has also been taken as a sign that the Bagaudae were militarily powerful enough to threaten a Roman army, but it is the only example of such power that we know of. Furthermore, Sarus may well have decided to take the time-honored path of least resistance while dealing with other priorities, which would mean that these Bagaudae were in the right place at the right time rather than being particularly militarily effective.[62]

The rebellions of 409 in Armorica and Britain have been taken as examples of rebellions by Bagaudae. Zosimus states that the inhabitants of Britain defended themselves from attacks by Germanic tribesmen, casting off Roman rule in the process, and that the Armoricans and other Gauls imitated them (Zos. 6.5.3). These apparently separatist rebellions and Rutilius Namatianus' reference to ostensible radical social change (*De Redito Suo* 1.213–216) were used by Thompson to argue that these provincials were Bagaudae. This has been thoroughly critiqued by Minor, who among other criticisms points out

62 Minor (1999) 39–42.

that there is no evidence in any other source that the Bagaudae attempted any kind of social change.[63] Similarly the apparent revolution at Bazas during the Visigothic siege of 414, where slaves and freemen who planned to massacre the local aristocrats were caught and executed (Paulinus of Pella, *Eucharisticos* 334–336), did not involve any Bagaudae. Rather, what we see here is violence erupting in a high-pressure situation.[64]

It is sometimes claimed, as part of an effort to show that the Bagaudae wished to secede from the Empire, that they ruled particular areas and were able to raise armed forces. The *Querolus*, a play possibly from 409–417, has been used to show that there were districts where Roman power did not reach. It specifies the region of the Loire, claiming that justice is dispensed by the people rather than by magistrates. However, the *Querolus* does not give us viable evidence for Bagaudae-ruled areas. The context of the play is unclear due to the difficulties of determining its exact date and the identity of its author. It might refer to regions recently independent of Roman control, breakaway "Bagaudic" areas. Alternatively, it could just as well be read as referring to local customs and power structures which may have survived in Roman Gaul since the conquest.[65] Although one would be inclined to think that the turmoil of the later imperial period would have given ample opportunity to separatist groups to carry out their agenda, it is certain that the Bagaudae are not explicitly referred to as having accomplished separation from the Empire at any point, by any source.

Rutilius Namatianus' account of how Exuperantius reconquered Armorica in 417 and returned local elites to power (*De Redito Suo* 1.213–216) has been read as a description of the conquest of a Bagaudic region where a "program" of social justice had been implemented, viz. the overthrow of local elites and their replacement by peasant or servile rebel leaders. On the other hand, it could equally well be read as part of a general eulogy concerning the reimposition of Roman law on the region, emphasizing the benefits of Roman rule to ruling elites and the ending of social chaos, with some abuse of local upstarts for good measure. There is also no explicit mention of the Bagaudae, and added to these problems is the difficulty of reconstructing the manuscript. In view of these problems, this episode cannot be included in the history of the Bagaudae.[66]

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63 Minor (2000) 84–92.

64 Minor (2000) 85–6.

65 Minor (2000) 88–92 and n. 101; See Rubin (1995) for a similar critique of the *Querolus* and the meaning of *patus*.

66 Minor (2000) 84–8; and Bartholomew (1982).

The next major event credited to the Bagaudae was the revolt of 435, led by Tibatto, of whom we know nothing beyond his name (*Chronica Gallica of 452*, 117).[67] According to the *Chronica Gallica of 452* the revolt took place in *Gallia Ulterior*—as we have seen, this is a region which is very hard to define.[68] At any rate, we are told that this region tried to break away from the Roman Empire, and that the *servitia* of Gaul attempted "Bagaudism" (*in Bacaudam conspirauere*). The meaning of *servitia* here is is probably that of "underclass," referring mainly to *coloni*, as there were relatively few slaves in Gaul.[69] Possibly this unrest extended to the towns, but this is conjecture. Tibatto was captured, while the ringleaders were either killed or defeated, which must mean that they surrendered or fled beyond the reach of the Empire (*Chronica Gallica of 452*, 119). This policy of clemency and selective punishment is reminiscent of Maximian's treatment of the Bagaudae of 284–285: he killed some and forgave others. This mix of retribution and mercy may have been favored for the practical reason that making an example of the ringleaders was more useful than slaughtering the peasantry, an attitude which displays both paternalistic contempt—treating peasants as good-hearted folk that had been led astray—and a pragmatic recognition of the difficulty of identifying and punishing everybody involved in a mass revolt. It is always much simpler and quicker to kill the leaders and blame everything on them.[70]

Minor is of the opinion that the *Chronica Gallica of 452* draws a distinction between the *seditio* (rebellion) of Tibatto and the *commotio* (agitation) of the Bagaudae; the former preceded the latter and facilitated it, in a similar fashion to the increase in Donatist activity following Gildo's rebellion, but was not otherwise connected to it.[71] This is an ingenious suggestion, but the entry for 435 explicitly links the beginning of Tibatto's revolt with the following Bagaudic uprising and the entry for 437 makes it clear that the end of the revolt was seen as closely linked to the capture of Tibatto and the deaths of other ringleaders. However, it is evident that the secession of Gaul was seen to have provoked a general revolt of the *servitia*, not just the *servitia* within *Gallia ulterior*. While Minor's sharp analysis is refreshing, his reading seems too strict. After all, the source links the two events. This is not to say that Minor is necessarily wrong. The chronicler may well have seen a link of some sort where

67 Minor (2002); (2004); (2007) give an impressively thorough analysis of the sources for this period of the history of the Bagaudae.

68 Minor (2002) 107–8.

69 Minor (2002) 110–3. See the *OLD* 1925, and Lewis and Short, 1683.

70 Rubin (1995) 149 n. 66; Minor (1997).

71 Minor (2002) 110. See the *OLD* 404 and 1903, and Lewis and Short, 383 and 1660.

there was none. Tibatto may not have been a Bagaudic leader, but the *Chronica* makes it clear that there were other leaders too, and the reason for his distinction is unknown.

Following Tibatto's capture, the next possible subsequent reference we have to Bagaudae in Gaul comes from the *Vita Sancti Germani*, which describes the saint's mission to Ravenna to intercede on behalf of the Armoricans, who had rebelled and been punished for it. Germanus' mission was disturbed by another rebellion in Armorica under Tibatto (*Vita Sancti Germani* 40). This would seem to indicate that Tibatto had somehow left Roman custody and launched another rebellion. However, the chronology here is uncertain: Tibatto was captured in 437, and Merobaudes mentions that Armorica was peaceful in 446, indicating that any rebellion was over by that stage (Flavius Merobaudes, *Pan*. 2.8–15). Overall, it seems that the reference to Tibatto's second revolt is a mistake by Germanus' biographer and should be disregarded.[72] Subsequently, the *Chronica* informs us that in 448 a doctor named Eudoxius joined the Huns because he had been accused of involvement with the Bagaudae, indicating that the Bagaudae were present and active in Gaul at this time (*Chronica Gallica of 452*, 133). This is the last episode of Bagaudic activity in Gaul that we know of, and they seem to have accomplished nothing of note.[73]

Perhaps unexpectedly, there rarely seems to have been any attempt by usurpers or barbarians invaders to ally themselves with Bagaudae. When Eudoxius ran away to the Huns, there is no indication that he gave material aid to the Huns and their allies, although information from runaways such as Eudoxius probably facilitated the Huns' advance. The lack of evidence for efforts to help barbarian invaders is an indication that the Bagaudae were not a well-organized, coherent insurgency. Indeed, it seems that barbarians were settled in parts of Gaul in order to suppress local uprisings. Only one instance of cooperation between Bagaudae and a barbarian has been recorded, when a Germanic war-leader called Rechiarius and a leader of Bagaudae called Basilius looted and destroyed the region around Caesaraugusta in Spain, taking prisoners when they attacked Ilerda (Hydatius, *Chronica* 142 (449). It is impossible to say how common this was, and it would be surprising if peasants were effective against experienced troops, barbarian or Roman. The military abilities of Bagaudae were probably limited, less than any barbarian warband, and no regular army seems to have had any trouble defeating them except in the most unfavorable circumstances (i.e. Sarus in 407). Barbarians therefore

72 Barrett (2009) esp. 213–4.

73 Minor (2004) esp. 78–81 and 89–90; Minor (2002); (2007).

had no reason to seek the help of Bagaudae, and were happy to repress them whenever called upon to do so.[74]

Bagaudae in Fifth Century Spain

The main focus of this chapter is events in Gaul; however, with information on the Bagaudae so thin on the ground, it is important to follow them wherever they may be found.[75] Our sole source for the Bagaudae in Spain is Hydatius' *Chronica*, and he specifically refers to the Bagaudae on a few occasions. The first example recounts the massacre of many Bagaudae by Asturius in Tarraconensis in 441 (*Chronica* 117). In 443 Asturius' successor, Merobaudes, killed more Bagaudae who came from Aracelli, which Larrea locates to the west of Pamplona (*Chronica* 120). A few years later, in 449, Bagaudae led by a man named Basilius perpetrated a massacre of their own, killing *foederati* and the bishop Leo (*Chronica* 133). Basilius managed to find an ally in Rechiarius and the two of them devastated the land near Caesaraugusta (Zaragoza), and then raided Ilerda (Lérida) where they were able to capture significant numbers of people after gaining entry to the city by treachery (*Chronica* 134). The last mention of the Bagaudae in the sources comes in 453–454, when Theoderic's brother Frederic massacred Bagaudae from Tarraconensis (*Chronica* 150).

Hydatius' evidence is much more geographically specific than the sources for the Bagaudae of Gaul. Bagaudae are attested in northern Spain where they also seem to have been a significant problem. Not only did they merit several mentions in Hydatius' *Chronicle*, but they also attracted the hostile attention of the government, which assigned a military force to deal with them. Their persistence indicates severe underlying problems in Spain in this period. They seem to have enjoyed a certain amount of success, defeating a military force and attacking cities like the Bagaudae of the third century. However, their inability to defeat well-prepared military forces, even with Rechiarius' support, indicates a lack of military capacity, which is consistent with what the

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74 Minor (2007) 44. For barbarian settlements, see Bachrach (1969) although Bachrach emphasizes (1969) 358 that barbarians were settled in order to control other barbarians, and were probably not primarily concerned with the Bagaudae; Minor (2004); Van Dam (1985) 52; Sánchez León (1996a) 14.

75 For an overview of the Bagaudae in Spain, see Sánchez León (1996a); (1996b); and Larrea (1998).

rest of the sources tell us about their failure to accomplish anything lasting through warfare.[76]

Larrea points to two main strands of thought regarding the Bagaudae in Spain, one of which sees the Bagaudae as a "nativistic" response to the Roman Empire, where un-Romanized locals rose up to reassert their separation from the Roman state and culture when the Empire's weakness offered them an opportunity. This is predicated on the assumption that since Bagaudae only seem to have appeared around the middle Ebro Valley, there was something unique about the location, namely a survival of local pre-Roman identity. This is unconvincing: as Larrea points out, while there may have been something special about this part of the Roman Empire that saw the Bagaudae appear, the reason for their genesis is probably not to be found in any single factor. In any case, the idea that the Bagaudae aimed to assert their identity through violence is not supported by any source. The other school of thought, which draws on the hypothesis that the revolts in Armorica were "Bagaudic," is that the Bagaudae in Spain were a manifestation of social discontent, where un-Romanized communities made common cause with a provincial underclass. This is a more sophisticated approach, certainly, but it is based on two unreliable assumptions: that there were violent and un-Romanized provincials who sought independence from Rome, which cannot be shown in the archaeological or literary evidence, and that the Armorican revolts were driven by the Bagaudae, which as we have seen cannot be confirmed by the evidence available to us.[77] Larrea suggests that the economic problems experienced in Spain in the fifth century caused unemployment and discontent, particularly among agricultural workers. Combined with wandering tribal bands, tribal and military deserters left over from various wars and expeditions, and local militias (referred to in 398 by the *Cod. Theod.* 7.9.1), the situation was ripe for violence. There were plenty of individuals with access to weapons and little to lose. There may have been social conflict motivated by resentment and desperation, but it is often hard to distinguish this social conflict and banditry.[78] This is broadly in line with the consensus that the Bagaudae represent a *jacquerie*, an uprising largely composed of peasants and under-integrated elements of provincial society.[79]

76 Larrea (1998) 136; Kulikowski (2004) 182–3.

77 Larrea (1998) 136–7 and n. 89; Bravo (1983); (1984); see also Sánchez León (1996a) 13 for an overview.

78 Larrea (1998) 140–2.

79 See Sánchez León (1996a) 14 Drinkwater (1984); (1989); (1992).

Christianity and Bagaudae

Some Christians saw the Bagaudae differently. We have evidence of a number of bishops and officials from the sixth and seventh centuries who were named "Bacauda," indicating that the Bagaudae had gained a certain amount of sympathy in some circles.[80] After all, well-to-do individuals would be unlikely to name their children after a disreputable band of brigands. The tradition of the Theban Legion claimed that the Bagaudae were fellow-Christians, for whose sake a legion of Christians suffered martyrdom at the hands of Maximian rather than fight their co-religionists, as recounted in the *Passion of Saint Maurice* and the *Passion of the Theban Martyrs*. It is difficult to accept this story at face value. The idea that an entire legion was Christian at this point in imperial history is highly implausible, and the idea that the Bagaudae were exclusively Christian is even more so.[81] If we accept the testimony of the sources, they were associated with the countryside, which was Christianized later than urban areas. However, the theme of soldiers refusing *en masse* to persecute fellow-Christians appears to have been too attractive to resist. The soldiers of the Theban Legion were remembered as martyrs and models of chivalry, and Maurice was regarded as a warrior-saint in medieval Europe.[82]

The *Vita Sancti Baboleni* refers at various points to a supposed fort of the Bagaudae, which gained its name from the troops Julius Caesar left there. Supposedly Maximian destroyed it while fighting Amandus and Aelianus, who are described in the *Vita* as Christians who resisted pagan oppression, and whom the Theban Legion refused to fight (*Vita Sancti Baboleni* 17–19). The site of the fort has never been found, and the episode seems to have reflected later traditions of righteous Christian Bagaudae who were supposedly persecuted by the state. Ultimately the narrative appears to say more about Christian perceptions of the Bagaudae than about the Bagaudae themselves.[83]

Salvian gives the Bagaudae a sympathetic press, claiming that people of relatively high status choose to become Bagaudae and live like barbarians rather than continue to suffer Roman injustice (*De Gub. Dei* 21–26). This is a common feature of Salvian's polemic. It is hard to tell what relation it bore to reality, if any; at most, it indicates a perception among some Christians that the Bagaudae were victims of injustice. It is clear, however, that Salvian sees them

80 Sánchez León (1996a) appendix 1.

81 See Van Dam (1985) 53–6; Sánchez León (1996b) 84; Van Berchem (1956). See Jones (1957) for an overview of the criticism of the Theban Legion tradition.

82 MacGregor (2004) especially 318; see also Woods (2008) 84 and n. 59 and Woods (1994).

83 Cracco Ruggini (1995); Sánchez León (1996a) 54–5; Sánchez León (1996b) 22, 54–6, 84.

as the result of oppression by Roman officials. He states that they are referred to as *rebelles* (rebels), *perditos* (depraved) and *criminosos* (criminals) (*De Gub. Dei* 24). He draws an association between barbarians and Bagaudae, stating that Bagaudae have lost the right to call themselves Roman (*De Gub. Dei* 21, 22, 26). This is the most interesting part of his testimony because it parallels the *Panegyric*, which compares the rebels to "the barbarian enemy" (10.4.4).[84]

One source that has been taken to depict Bagaudae is the *Vita de Sancti Martini*, and Sánchez León gives it a great deal of emphasis in his analysis of the transformation of the Bagaudae into Christian heroes.[85] The various manuscripts agree that Martin travelled to see a site where a supposed martyr received veneration. Upon communing with the dead man's spirit Martin learned that he had been a bandit, and an end was put to his veneration. There is nothing in the *Vita* to indicate that the bandit was involved with the Bagaudae, and hence it cannot be said to show us anything on how the Bagaudae were viewed. It does indicate that locals might view an individual as sympathetic or wronged even if they were deemed to be criminals by the powerful, but there is nothing here that is specific to the Bagaudae.[86]

Conceptions of the Bagaudae

It is evident, then, that it is difficult to define the Bagaudae. As a phenomenon it consists of groups and individuals whose motives are difficult to untangle and whose aims sometimes disappear in the welter of public discourse. As previously noted, there has been a temptation to explain them in a "monolithic" manner, without regard for their complexities, but this is changing. In the field of Bagaudic studies, scholars have more recently sought to acknowledge and take into account the complexities of the Bagaudae.[87] Larrea acknowledges the difficulty of understanding the Bagaudae in Spain within the context of the few references to them that survive and suggests a composite of local militias, shepherds, hill-men, and deserters.[88] Drinkwater arrives at a similar conclusion, remarking that the Bagaudae were probably mixed in social composition

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84 See Minor (2010); Rubin (1995) 151–4; Sánchez León (1996b) 41–2; Drinkwater (1995) 210; Drinkwater (1999) 288. See also the *OLD* 1738–9, 1468, 504.

85 Sánchez León (1996b) 93–7.

86 Drinkwater (1999) 288. Parallel modern phenomena are discussed in Creechan and De La Herran-Garcia (2005).

87 Particularly Minor in his series of articles from (1996–2010); see also Rubin (1995).

88 Larrea (1998) 132–42.

and motivations.[89] This is probably true; however, this does not mean that the identity of the Bagaudae is a closed case. There must have been something that motivated writers in antiquity to apply the label "Bagaudae" to some groups and not to others.

That there were insurgencies in Gaul in late antiquity is beyond doubt, if we can place any faith in the sources. The testimony of Merobaudes to the subjugation of Armorica indicates that there were attempts involving military force to remove the region from direct Roman rule. However, this does not mean that the Bagaudae were involved. The Bagaudae used physical force, but there is no evidence that their aims involved replacing the Roman state or even overthrowing it.

In the case of the Spanish Bagaudae, it seems that at least some of them, those led by Basilius, acted much like the barbarian warbands who were fighting for power in the Iberian peninsula: they massacred their enemies wherever possible, they raided towns, and devastated the countryside. These terroristic acts, and their fairly rapid elimination, indicate that they were seen as another military threat. This is not to say that those labeled Bagaudae in northern Spain necessarily had the coherent political goals that characterize an insurgency; there is no evidence for this, and many of them may merely have been groups of unemployed soldiers and desperadoes who sought to survive in any manner necessary with no thought for more abstract goals.

In Gaul, matters are more complex due to the greater number and variety of sources that refer to Bagaudae. Comparisons between revolts earlier in the history of Roman Gaul do not immediately appear promising. The revolt of Florus and Sacrovir in 21, for instance, seems to have been in response to debt and taxation and led by members of the provincial elite who sought to break away from Roman rule (Tac. *Ann.* 3.41). It does not seem to have been noted for the participation of peasants, or to have been a popular revolt, and loyal local tribal elites were directly involved in defeating it. The revolt of Mariccus in 69 appears to have been motivated by millenarian concerns (Tac. *Hist.* 2.61). Its leadership by an ordinary Boian tribesman indicates that it was a popular revolt, and it was relatively easily put down. While Sacrovir required the attentions of two legions plus supporting auxiliaries, Mariccus' formidable-sounding force of 8,000 was defeated by a local militia and some cohorts (Tac. *Ann.* 3.45; Tac. *Hist.* 2.61). Evidently Mariccus' followers were numerous but neither well-equipped nor well-organized, suggesting that provincial elites were not involved.

89 Drinkwater (1999) 288.

The revolts in Gaul in the first century were most likely part of a continuum of provincial responses to incorporation into the Empire—reactions to economic and cultural dislocation as a result of Roman imperialism.[90] Maternus seems to have been a rare charismatic leader who was a military deserter, similar to Tacfarinas in that he managed to gather enough like-minded people to conduct a relatively successful armed insurgency, even if his ambitions may not have been as far-reaching as Herodian claimed.[91] Effectively he was a *latro*, a bandit, who gained an unusual degree of significance. The Bagaudae appear to have been cut from a different cloth. The first and later references to them in the sources refer to their inferior social status—plowmen, shepherds, farmers, and *servitia* (*Pan. Lat.* 10.4.3–4). Another feature of the discourse about the Bagaudae that distinguishes them is the association with barbarians in some of the sources, notably the *Panegyric* and Salvian (*De Gub. Dei* 5.5). The Bagaudae were not barbarians, but they were thought to behave like barbarians, pillaging the countryside and attacking settlements. Unsurprisingly there was an association between this kind of behavior and *latrocinium* (banditry), which was associated with irregular warfare of the kind waged by many northern European tribes.[92] For example, Caesar refers to raiding by Germanic tribesmen as *latrocinium*, stating that it was considered good training for warfare (*BGall.* 6.23). Aurelius Victor mentions that *latrones* (bandits) were to be found among the Bagaudae (39.17–19), drawing an explicit association between the behavior of the Bagaudae and banditry. It is risky to read too much into this, though. *Latro* (bandit) was a term of abuse, applied generously to hated and feared individuals (for instance, see SHA *Maximus et Balbinus* 17.1.2.6). Given the unashamed elitism of classical writers, it is possible that all of these labels—bandit, peasant, *servitia*—functioned as insults.[93] Certainly Salvian saw some of them as coming from a loftier if impoverished social background, and Eudoxius was a doctor (*De Gub. Dei* 5.5; *Chronica Gallica of 452*, 133). Yet the impression of peasants remains. Authors chose these insults over the many others available to them, which inclines me to believe that they reflect reality in some measure.

The Bagaudae were not an insurgency in the sense that they were a coherent organization or movement which used military force in order to achieve a well-defined set of socio-political aims. As has often been noted, they were

90 See Dyson (1975) for an Empire-wide discussion of revolts; Shaw (1984) is an excellent survey of banditry in the Roman Empire.

91 Okamura (1988) 301–2.

92 See Shaw (1984).

93 Rubin (1995) 138 n. 31.

a response to terror as well as a cause of it: terror occasioned by the roaming bands of barbarians with whom Gaul was afflicted in the late third and fifth centuries, and the terror inflicted by state officials intent on squeezing as much as they could from the provinces. This predatory attitude towards taxpayers was nothing new in the Roman world, but it was now driven by an increasingly urgent need to pay for state expenditure on warfare and diplomacy. There may have been other factors driving the Bagaudae. As we have seen, some scholars have ascribed political or romantic motives to them, but these cannot be safely reconstructed. Whatever their aims, terror certainly resulted from their actions. It may not have been part of an overall plan aimed at causing fear and disruption, but the destructiveness which was ascribed to them is explicit and implicit in the sources. The *Panegyric* claims that they destroyed fields, while the *Chronica Gallica of 452* states that all of the *servitia* of Gaul rose up in a conspiracy. The latter is not a quantitative statement, of course, but the author's use of such a sweeping statement indicates fear and paranoia about a violently resentful underclass—certainly a terrorizing experience, even if such terror was a side-effect rather than an intentional outcome of their actions.

Interestingly the sources tend to see the mass of Bagaudae as victims—either injustice and over-taxation drove them to their actions, or malignant ringleaders provoked them into following a foolish and antisocial course of action. This has the effect of placing the burden firmly on the Roman state to change its behavior, or on vicious individuals to refrain from doing evil (e.g. Tibatto criticized for his treachery in the *Vita Sancti Germani* 40), removing any responsibility from the vast majority of Bagaudae and showing them as reacting to circumstances rather than implementing an agenda. This narrative was based in turn on ancient views of lower-status individuals and individual morality. Throughout, the dominant impression is that nobody, even those who were sympathetic to the Bagaudae, was interested in investigating what drove people to become Bagaudae. Those who had to fight them were more interested in containment than in addressing the causes of revolt, while Christian moralists such as Salvian were more interested in scoring theological and political points than in finding out why there were Bagaudae.[94] The writers of the time were simply not interested in anything that did not involve important men.

94 Similarly, in matters of taxation the Roman state preferred *ad hoc* responses to grievances rather than systemic reform. Taxes might be lowered or cancelled when the emperor was lobbied, but there was generally little attempt to address the causes of grievances, MacMullen (1987).

Some Conclusions

Many of the prior works on the Bagaudae have tended to take for granted that the historical sources knew what they were referring to when they mentioned the Bagaudae. This is the assumption that underlies the initial approach to all of the sources, that there is a certain amount of knowledge that can be teased out by careful reading. Some scholars have gone further and assumed that there was a basic coherence to the Bagaudae's attitudes and actions, compatible in some ways with an insurgency. But as we have seen, the Bagaudae pose a large number of epistemological difficulties to those who would study the subject, not unlike some modern amorphous groups. Information about such groups is often based on outdated or exaggerated facts, or based on uncertain information. Getting to grips with some modern movements—trying to find their "essence"—has been challenging and it seems not always entirely successful, and this in a contemporary environment where empirically verifiable truth is highly prized, not least because it can have an effect on government policy. The authors of late antiquity labored under no such constraints. They were not motivated by the need to establish the existence and nature of an enemy, the better to combat it. Instead, they gave a label with local coloring to a phenomenon in which they were at best mildly interested: violent low-status Gallic provincials could be called "Bagaudae," and the idea of applying it in a rigorous way to describe a politically aware, violent and organized insurgency seems never to have occurred to them.

Whither the Bagaudae, then? There is a temptation to flinch and point to the endless difficulties with the sources and mutter something about how the discourse about the Bagaudae is the really interesting part, finishing with a sub-Baudrillarian flourish about how they did not "happen." This would be easy—after all, we hear almost nothing about the concrete effects of actions that our sources attribute to the Bagaudae, not to mention our difficulties in actually pinning down what "Bagaudae" meant to those who used it in the ancient world. This "pessimistic" view has a respectable pedigree, too; it is hard to argue with Jullian's judgment that it was impossible to know anything about such a fleeting phenomenon which had accumulated a disproportionately large tradition.[95] This does not mean that the study of the Bagaudae is over and done with. On the contrary, the last thirty years or so have seen the publication of a number of impressive analyses which have applied a high degree of rigor to the subject. Even if the way forward is unclear, I believe it is premature to declare that all of the possibilities of the sources have been exhausted.

95 Jullian (1926) 51 and 53.

Some of our sources are quite clear on what they mean when they mention Bagaudae: generally speaking they refer to violent actions committed by peasants and bandits, often against towns and farms. Even if there is no evidence that it was an insurgency, it is hard to dismiss it as simple banditry. For this reason, it has become increasingly common to refer to the Bagaudae as forming a *jacquerie*, a peasant revolt that is an expression of discontent without necessarily having any clear political program. However what "Bagaudae" meant to the provincials who first used the term is unclear, let alone what it meant to those who were labeled Bagaudae. Evidently the term was well enough known to our sources, indicating a certain level of notoriety outside of Gaul, but many of them understood it as a term of abuse used to denigrate low-status persons who dared to use violence. Some Christian writers were a little more sympathetic to the Bagaudae, but nonetheless ruthlessly used them as convenient examples to make a point about the sinfulness of the imperial government, following another tradition of attacking the powerful for their abuses in order to further a Christian agenda. Medieval writers carried on this tradition and saw the Bagaudae as martyrs.

In all of this remains a crucial gap: what did the Bagaudae themselves think? The point this leads to is certainly pessimistic and perhaps nihilistic: what the Bagaudae thought does not matter and never has. Any trouble they caused to the imperial regime of the day was nugatory. Whatever drove them to do what they did went largely unaddressed as long as the empire reigned in western Europe, and they appeared again and again. The Roman state followed a time-honored policy of ignoring trouble until it was impossible to let it continue, whereupon they would kill some and spare the rest, if convenient; fighting terror with terror and occasional pragmatic mercy. As soon as the Bagaudae appeared they were immediately absorbed into elite discourses, to bolster a general's reputation; as raw material for an attack on insufficiently virtuous officials; as a note in various chronicles, or to make points about virtue and evil in later periods. Whatever sympathy they may have gained among some observers did them little good. More destructive than their defeat and dispersal by the armed forces of the Roman state and its allies, they were utterly annihilated by the labels attached to them, to the point where we can only see them through the eyes of people who were at best interested only in their own agendas, and at worst hostile. This is a valuable if, from the historian's point of view, grim lesson: military defeat may be temporary, but controlling the discourse around subversion and then turning it on the subversives ensures that they will be permanently disenabled.[96]

96 Thanks are due to the libraries of University College Dublin and Trinity College Dublin, to the editors for their feedback and understanding, to Dr. Philip De Souza for his support

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CHAPTER 12

Epilogue: Looking Ahead

Jonathan P. Roth

History, in the Greco-Roman tradition had two functions. As part of the education of the elites, it was meant to train them in how to be good men, and to be effective politicians and military figures. History, however, was also seen as a branch of philosophy, and the events of the past were thought to give clues to how humans behaved, as individuals and as groups. Of course, then, as now, these two goals are linked. As noted in Lee Brice's introductory chapter, modern works on insurgency and terrorism use history, including ancient history, didactically, although not always with a sufficiently critical eye to the historical sources. We need to learn the lessons of history in order to better put down, or to succeed in, insurgency, on one hand, and understand the fundamental nature of revolt and its suppression, and what they teach us about humans and human relations.

Brice observes that the terms "insurgency" and "terrorism" are not synonymous, nor is there a universally accepted definition of either. Literally, insurgency means "rising up" in Latin and the term for rebellion in many languages use this image, the Greek *apostato*, for example, the German *Aufstand* and the Chinese *qiyi*. The term "revolution," comes in use in the sixteenth century and gained a positive political meaning beginning in the eighteenth century, and this trend has been accelerated by its use by Marxists. Seen from a partisan political perspective, insurgency tends to be used by those defending an established order, rather than those approving of attempts to overthrow it.

There has been, however, in recent times, a tendency to use the word insurgency in a more restricted sense than simply a rebellion or revolt. The United State's Counterinsurgency Field Manual (*FM 3–24* 2006), written primarily by former General David Petraeus, states that insurgency is undertaken "generally from a position of relative weakness outside existing state institutions." This definition, adopted by Sarah Melville in her discussion of Assyrian counterinsurgency, reflects the U.S. military's theoretical debates over the use of counterinsurgency, informed by the United States' experiences with, and perceptions of, guerrilla war in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. Used in this sense, insurgency excludes political insurgencies, such as that of Cyrus against his brother Artaxerxes, in which Xenophon participated, or the regional or provincial successions, such as that of the Palmyrene Empire of Zenobia in the

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third century CE. It is difficult, however, to maintain this distinction from a historical perspective.[1]

As many modern insurgent movements routinely attack civilians, especially with explosives, the terms insurgency and terrorism are often linked, as in this volume. The fundamental meaning of terrorism is fairly widely accepted: killing, torturing or wounding non-combatants, or destroying their property, in order to instill a sense of fear in a wider population.[2] This is done for a number of reasons: to punish perceived enemies, for example, to provoke response from an enemy force or to destabilize a government. The term, however, is problematic. As with the term bandit, used both in ancient and modern times, it can simply mean an enemy of the state. Thus the term "militant" is sometimes substituted in order to be more politically (and legally) neutral, as is the term "non-state actor."[3]

The term terrorist has been used in the context of ancient and pre-modern history. There are cases in which large numbers of civilians were murdered, for example in the province of Asia during the Mithridatic War, but since the motive there was to eliminate a class of people, rather than to instill fear, it is not terrorism in the modern sense. The Judaean *Sicarii* and the medieval Ismaili sect usually called the Assassins in English appear in virtually every historical survey of terrorism,[4] but while instilling fear in a civilian population has been a tactic of war used both by state forces and by insurgents, what is termed terrorism in these cases is actually targeted assassination. The killing of enemy rulers, high officials, and military figures is banned by modern conventions, but was common in ancient warfare. Indeed, bringing about the death of an enemy supreme leader is almost a *sine qua non* of any insurgency. Richardson notes that one of the earliest extant military texts, the inscription of the Early Bronze Age king Enmetena of Lagash envisions an uprising killing a rival king. Indeed, during battle, it was often the goal to slay the enemy commander, as illustrated in the Alexander Mosaic. Insurgents often target either

1 The definition in *FM 3–24* excludes the participation of state institutions, though such organizations frequently participate in uprisings. Several of the chapters in this work discuss the revolt of regions or cities that were coordinated by local state institutions, for example, Melville on the anti-Assyrian uprising of Babylonia and Wiesehöfer on the revolt of the city of Sidon against Persia.

2 See the discussion on definitions in Brice, chapter one. In recent times, terrorism has developed its own ideology and culture, expressed especially in handbooks and manuals, justifying it, setting out its goals, and suggesting tactics. See Marighella (1969); Naji (2004), English translations of both are easily accessible on the internet.

3 See Schultz and Dew (2006).

4 Taylor and Gautron (2015).

rulers or their representatives, and the killing of rebel leaders was a well-used tactic of counterinsurgencies in ancient times (e.g., Viriathus and Q. Sertorius).

The assassination of important individuals is used both in ancient insurgencies and counterinsurgencies, but this is not terrorism in the modern sense. One of the features of modern insurgency is attacking the institutions and symbols of the state, especially what would now be called "soft targets." At Sidon, for example, the first attacks were on Persian storehouses, officials and the royal "paradise" or hunting-park. While this latter certainly had symbolic value, as Wiesehöfer points out, such places also had a real function as centers of Persian control. Johstono notes that the Egyptian insurgents targeted temples and irrigation works, both symbols of Ptolemaic power and important parts of the economy. In the opening stages of the Jewish War, Josephus reports that the archives of Jerusalem were burned, no doubt to destroy the records of debt, but perhaps also as a symbol of control (the Egyptian rebels also burned archives, as did no doubt many ancient insurgents). Russell also notes that attacks against Roman institutions occurred at the beginning of the Batavian revolt. These attacks might have caused terror, but their primary target was the state—not civilians per se, so this is not terrorism in the modern sense.

It was only with the invention of gunpowder that the sort of sudden and unexpected mass murder of innocent people characteristic of modern terrorist attacks became possible. Gunpowder bombs were used by late nineteenth and early twentieth century terrorists, especially the Anarchists, both in assassinations and in random attacks on civilian targets, such as the bombing of Wall Street in 1920. The invention of plastic explosives during World War Two made terrorist attacks easier and more deadly. Terrorism requires not only explosives but also mass communication. It is the ability to communicate destruction and death widely that makes terrorism effective, and this is exactly what was lacking given ancient communication media. It is not coincidental that terrorism by non-state actors arises not with the invention of gunpowder (Guy Fawkes was a would-be assassin), but with the rise of mass circulation newspapers in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Many studies of terrorism, including several in this anthology, discuss "state terror," a term coined by Thomas P. Thornton in 1964.[5] There is no question that instilling fear, and indeed terror, has been a tool of both military and security forces of states through history. Indeed it is widely assumed, especially from those viewing history from a Marxist or neo-Marxist perspective, that violence is intrinsic to state formation and maintenance, what Richardson calls the "violence-as-origin" theory (ironically, this seems to be generally true of

5 Thornton (1964) 72. See also the discussion in Brice, chapter one in this volume.

Marxist states). Richardson notes that Sumerian civilization developed in a distinctly non-military environment. In Sumer, the institution of the secular king, the *lugal*, developed out of the military forces of the city-state around 3000 BCE, hundreds of years after the institution of the city-state.

The Assyrian state is commonly cited as one that used terror as a tool, and as Richardson points out, fear or terror (*puluḫtu* in Assyrian) was a fundamental element of Mesopotamian political theory and was seen as part of what made a king or indeed a state. Whether terror in the Assyrian state, was on a level of magnitude different from other contemporary polities (as argued by some in this anthology) needs to be considered. It has been suggested that our view of the Assyrians is more a function of their use of horrific images as propaganda, than a different reality on the ground. Conversely, the Persian Empire is generally held up as an example of tolerant rule. Yet, as Wiesehöfer points out, the Persians used terror, mass killing, and wholesale destruction as military-political tools, especially in the suppression of insurgency. Rome is another polity often associated with state terror, the subject of Marco Simón's discussion of the Middle Republican wars in Spain and the argument over whether the Romans were more "terroristic" than other states is part of a debate between William V. Harris and Arthur Eckstein, over the uniqueness of Roman bellicosity.[6] It is clear, however, that the use of killing, rapine, enslavement, and destruction as means of instilling terror was doubtless the norm, and not the exception, in virtually every pre-modern culture. Rather than focusing on its use, a more fruitful area of research would be looking into cases in which restraint was practiced, as Russell argues the Romans did in suppressing the Jewish Revolt.

There is a political element, as well as a semantic one, over the use of the term state terror. While it is certainly applicable to the practice of Assyrians (and Mongols and Nazis and Daesh) of using mass, public killings as a means of intimidation, does the term equally apply to the killing of civilians, or the destruction of property concomitant to war? The destruction wrought by an ancient siege was horrific even by modern standards, yet the siege is undoubtedly a military operation, so is the death and destruction "state terror" or the "tragedy of war?" Certainly, modern bombing theory, as expressed by Giuilo Douhet and his twentieth-century acolytes, saw terrorizing civilians as a military tool, though even the most devoted advocate of strategic bombing no longer accepts this. Can all collateral damage of war be called state terror because it causes fear and terror in the innocent? Any sort of war (or group violence for that matter) is a terrifying experience. The most sophisticated "smart bombs"

6 Harris (1985); Eckstein (2009).

and the most intensive training in international law will never eliminate the death and suffering of innocents from military conflict. If we use the term state terror too broadly, especially in the context of the discussion of the sort of deliberate terrorist targeting of the innocent and defenseless, we edge toward justifying the latter.

When using the term state terror, we need to be especially attentive when referring to the routine functioning of a state, and not its reaction to insurgency or warfare. While the French Revolutionary government suppressed the uprising in the Vendée with extraordinary brutality, it was the draconian political measures of the Committee of Public Safety that led to Edmund Burke using the term terrorism. Given the nature of daily life in polities such as the Stalinist Soviet Union, the Nazi Third Reich, Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge and today's Islamic State, the use of the term state terror is certainly descriptive. The situation of African-Americans in the American South both under slavery and Jim Crow, in which arrests, beatings, rape and both judicial and extrajudicial murder was used to terrorize a minority population, can also be called state terror, though the state in question was not a national one. This is the Spartan state terror described in the chapter by Ellen Millender. The analogy is useful, when applied to states, such as the Latin American dictatorships of the last century, to which she refers.

One must be very deliberate, however, in the use of this term. The destruction of a village or city and the killing and displacement of its inhabitants during the course of putting down a revolt is not merely symbolism or political theater. On the other hand, publicly humiliating someone is not the same as physical torturing him or her. This distinction, not always recognized by academic theorists, is all too apparent to the victims of actual state terror, either routine or counterinsurgent. Even when law officers in democratic states act with courtesy and integrity, interactions with police and other authority figures can be frightening. Indeed, fear of punishment and even of public humiliation (e.g. in the form of having one's crimes revealed) is an important deterrent to crime and it is hard to imagine how peace could be maintained if a state could not use violence or the threat of violence against criminals. After all, being robbed or being in the midst of a riot is a terrifying experience that makes one appreciate the importance of law and order. Unfortunately, much postmodern theory posits an unreal relationship between "elites" and the "marginalized" in liberal democracies. If we teach that free societies are routine purveyors of state terror, who can blame students for believing that violence and even terror are acceptable tactics?[7]

7 For a critique of the political origins and tendencies of postmodern theory, see Woline (2006).

A fundamental mistake made by modern military theorists, strategists, and tacticians is to see what are modern developments as ancient, and even intrinsic to a culture or geographic region. Timothy Howe aptly and ably critiques this view in his discussion of the modern use of Alexander's campaign in "Afghanistan," a region that did not exist until the eighteenth century. The idea that different peoples or races have distinctive military characteristics is a trope as far back as the Greeks, and is certainly alive today. Ancient history has a great deal to offer in this debate, for example, in the contrasting views of William Harris and Arthur Eckstein on whether Rome had a uniquely bellicose culture, and the discussion over Victor Davis Hanson's idea of a "Western Way of War."[8] These academic debates have a great deal of relevance "on the ground" in counterinsurgency, as they can, and do, inform how one deals with uprisings and terrorism.

Historians have long discussed the issue of whether peoples have intrinsic or inherent cultures, and if so, why. Wiesehöfer makes some very cogent remarks about this topic in his discussion of the way our view of Persia can be skewed by "racial-genetic" notions about "Indo-Europeans" and "Semites." There is also the question of continuity—if one is going to ascribe an eternal element to a people or region, then it is necessary to look at its continuous history, including the long period between the end of antiquity (the seventh century CE at the latest), and today. The *longue durée* is nothing new to the ancient historian, for whom a span of hundreds or even thousands of years is business as usual. The understanding of how cultures can constantly change, while maintaining a strong internal sense of immutability, helps to inoculate us against the "since time immemorial" generalization. A Mediterranean World approach, as in this anthology, which sees ancient Persia, for example, as equally as relevant to Western History as Greece or Rome not only introduces more exempla, but also allows a more nuanced understanding.

A major obstacle to the study of insurgency and counterinsurgency in ancient times is the proper use of primary sources. It is in the critical analysis of the evidence, and in making their conclusions known, that ancient historians can make their most useful contributions to the study of insurgency and terrorism. Applying the rigor and deep scholarship of Classics and other ancient disciplines to the understanding of insurgency and terrorism opens up not only new evidence but applies well-tested critical tools to primary sources, which are all too often used naïvely. The necessity of learning and working with at least one and usually two ancient languages (Greek and Latin in the case of Classics, for example) as well as German and French, makes ancient historians much more aware of, and able to interpret, the use of language in sources and

8 See note 6 and Hanson (2002).

the problems of translation. Howe's discussion of the misuse of Alexander's campaign in the discussion of counterinsurgency (COIN) theory is a good example of how an ancient historian can correct an incorrect, and potentially dangerous, misinterpretation of the past. The chapters by Richardson and Melville on Mesopotamian insurgency show the value of intensive analysis of the language of rebellion. Couper's in-depth discussion of the Bagaudae and the insurgencies in Late Roman Gaul is highly informative, and illustrates the difficulties involved in interpreting ancient sources.

As noted by both Richardson and Melville, insurgency was common in Mesopotamia. Texts in cuneiform, ranging in time from 3500 BCE to the first century CE, are an important corpus of information, often dealing with insurgency and counterinsurgency Richardson's paragraph on a Babylonian letter, a report on an insurgent named Zimri-hammu, shows how much we can derive even from a single document. Critically translated material from Assyria, and other empires, is becoming increasingly available, but the number of untranslated cuneiform documents is enormous. In addition, while royal inscriptions (and palace reliefs) tend to get a great deal of attention, letters, orders, and reports survive in much larger numbers than in any other ancient written tradition. Wiesehöfer's chapter on Sidon provides a good corrective on the naïve use of Greek sources to understand Achaemenid Persia.

Egyptology has uncovered and published an almost unprecedented picture of an ancient culture, but the focus of this discipline has been primarily on the period in which Egypt was an independent state. Of course, during the Pharaonic period, the Egyptians often dealt with insurgences, and were sometimes insurgents themselves, for example against Hyksos rule. There are some important Egyptian written sources that need to be better integrated into the understanding of ancient counterinsurgency. The period in which the Egyptians were dominated by foreigners, and engaged in not infrequent rebellions against them, is less of a focus for Egyptologists. During the period of Hellenistic and Roman domination, we have about 100,000 papyri, and the Greek texts among them are increasingly being incorporated into military history. There are also, however, many demotic texts, whose translation and interpretation would give us a clearer picture of the ethnically Egyptian perspective.

The main focus of the study of western antiquity is the Greek and Roman texts, especially the histories that have survived. Focusing on questions such as insurgency and guerrilla war requires a new look and the major military historical sources: Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Livy, Tacitus and Ammianus Marcellinus. Most studies have, quite naturally, focused on

the land and sea warfare between regular armies and navies, but all of these writers contain information valuable to the scholar of insurgency. In addition, as Wiesehöfer has shown, normally marginal historians, such as Diodorus Siculus can provide important insight, if used critically. In some case, of course the use of a less reliable source is necessary, for example Dio Cassius' descriptions (68.32, 69.12–14) of the War of Kitos, the Jewish insurgency of the early second century CE. Those interested in sieges are often frustrated by the work of the third century BCE writer, Aeneas Tacticus, as he spends more energy describing how to prevent betrayal than on the tactics of defending a fortified city (Aen Tac. *Poliorketika*). The description of the military and security measures of a Greek city, however, are invaluable in studying the mechanics of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

The Jews were involved in any number of insurgencies, against the Babylonians, Seleucids, and Romans, and, in less well-known cases, Jewish troops took part in counterinsurgency operations. We are fortunate to have a remarkably large collection of literary and documentary sources that touch on ancient Jewish history in general, and insurgencies in particular. This collection includes not only the Hebrew Bible, but literary sources in Hebrew and Aramaic dating to the Second Temple and Roman periods. Talmudic and Midrashic texts contain nuggets of information but must be used critically. Here cooperation with specialists is vital. Especially important are the apocalyptic and sectarian texts, those among the Dead Sea scrolls and from other sources and traditions. These can provide important insight into the psychology and sociology of ancient religious insurgents. In addition, there are some papyri (such as the remarkable Bar Kokhba letters), inscriptions and coins, which shed light on Jewish insurgencies. Equally important is the Greek literature passed down in the Byzantine and Orthodox traditions.

The Books of Maccabees, Josephus, and of course, the New Testament are familiar to military historians, but these too need to be read with attention to Judaism and the Jewish culture of the time, not with an anachronistic back-projection of modern stereotypes. This is especially true of the idea of the Jews as a non-military people. This is a feature of their existence in the Christian and Muslim worlds, but in antiquity warfare and military service was common, both in Jewish states and among Jewish minorities. This has to inform our understanding of the Jewish role in insurgency and counterinsurgency. The geography of Israel and the support given by the Israeli state to archaeology has resulted in an extraordinarily large number of finds relative to the small size of the country. This is especially true of a place outside Europe. Masada is a literal *locus classicus* of insurgency and recent excavations have increased

our knowledge of the site.[9] A rare discovery was the recent one of a cave at Herodium apparently used by insurgents during the Bar Kokhba revolt. There is a growing field of conflict archaeology, and although insurgencies are less likely to leave traces, those that do survive can be quite informative.[10]

This book focuses on the ancient West, but a global approach to the study of insurgency and terrorism necessitates not only drawing modern analogies from world history, but looking at the ancient history of other regions, principally China. The ancient Chinese were intensely interested in political and military matters, and their theoretical work goes far beyond Sunzi's *Art of War*. Recent discoveries of texts, especially of the Han Dynasty, as well as on-going archaeological discovery, have expanded our knowledge of Chinese military and conflict history. Here again, cooperation between disciplines and institutions will be the key to progress in incorporating this material. With the exception of the remarkable text known as the Arthashastra, a significant and often ignored text as regards counterinsurgency, Indian literature pays little attention to military affairs. Nevertheless, a critical approach will give us access to what is available.

Theory is as important as evidence in reconstructing the past. The unfortunate weakness of much contemporary theory is especially obvious in the study of war. There have been, however, important strides in our understanding of the human mind, based on neuroscience, and this has begun to inform historical views of the ancient mind.[11] Advances in our understanding of linguistics have stressed the universality of grammatical structure, and undermined the ideas of cultural semantics that underlies much modern sociological theory. Although some of the complaints that H. H. Turney-High made in the 1940s about Anthropology's ignoring conflict still apply, there has been an important literature about the origins of war that have increased our understanding of the nature of conflict in a social setting. This scholarship too, needs to be incorporated into military and security studies.

The problem, however, does not lie entirely with the modern theorist. Ancient historians can make the mistake of inappropriately applying contemporary terminology to an ancient situation. Thus what was putting down a rebellion in previous scholarship, is termed COIN, the faddish U.S. Military acronym for counterinsurgency. Yet, the opposite approach, in which one simply uses the ancient terminology and avoids translation, can be equally

9 For a critical analysis see, Roth (1995); for more recent discoveries, start with the series Aviram et al. (1980–2007).

10 E.g., Pollard and Banks (2007); (2008).

11 Heidenrich and Roth (forthcoming).

misleading. One of the primary goals of history is to try to understand and distinguish the universal from the particular, and this is no less the case in the study of insurgency and terrorism.

Academic politics, and the politics of academics, play a not insignificant role in scholarly writing about insurgency, as well as in its reception. Both Marxism, which enjoyed and enjoys remarkable success in historical theory, and postmodern theories, many of which can be characterized as Cultural Marxism, influence scholarly approaches to insurgency and terrorism studies. This is especially evident in the approach to anti-colonial insurgencies, and those in modern times. This leads, ironically, to a Eurocentric view of rebellion in the pre-modern and modern worlds, ignoring non-Western imperialism, such as that in eighteenth century China, which colonized regions of Central Asia or Oman, which had colonies both in Africa and India. In addition, revolts, such as the Indian uprising in 1857 are characterized not as reactionary movements of marginalized elites, but as popular or nationalist ones. There is even a movement among activist professors to boycott any interaction between the academy and the military, which necessarily retards understanding of war and conflict.[12]

Classical Marxism had a great influence on twentieth century ancient history, molding the modern view of ancient individuals such as Spartacus and the Gracchi brothers, though this has become less so over time. Unlike scholars dealing with Classical literature, historians of antiquity, especially ancient military history, have been less influenced by postmodern theory than their colleagues in other fields. It has nevertheless made major inroads, a trend that is not necessarily to be applauded.[13] Postmodernism is generally not useful in the understanding of historical conflict, and this is especially the case in the study of ancient insurgencies. One hopes that younger scholars will turn in more fruitful directions.

Couper discusses and criticizes the view of E. A. Thompson that the Bagaudae were "peasant revolutionaries," an idea that continues to be popular.[14] The idea of the "popular revolution" often obscures the fact that even when they claim to

12 Besteman, et al. (2009). The work includes a "Pledge of Non-Participation in Counterinsurgency," 192.

13 For a critique of this approach see the review article Roth (2012).

14 Understanding the origins of insurrection and of terrorism are necessary both for academic study and for the military and security response to them. Here too, the "lens" of the author is significant. It is not coincidental that Thompson, like Hobsbawm, was a member of the Communist Party's Historians Group, established in England to promote Marxist-Leninist ideas.

be done on behalf of the people, insurgents often represent a minority within any particular group, and are often vigorously opposed by other factions and groups. Study of modern revolution, moreover, reveals that the leadership of insurgencies generally comes not from the peasant or working class, but from wealthy and elite groups that have been, for one reason or another, marginalized. Wiesehöfer notes that one of the causes of the Sidonian revolt against Persia was the economic pressure on the wealthy of the city, forced to pay for the building and manning of warships. Since the growth of states and empires had much more impact on elite groups than lower ones, this is an approach that might prove fruitful in further study. The bad behavior—corruption, arrogance, and cruelty, for example—of imperial officials is often blamed for insurgency, but it should be borne in mind that most of the interaction of these agents of empire would have been with the local elites, and not the peasantry or urban poor. The role of elites feeling dishonored and humiliated, as a motive force for insurgency, has not been sufficiently investigated.[15] Richardson refers to the ritual humiliation described in Middle Bronze Age texts, and Wiesehöfer to Diodorus Siculus describing the hubris of Persian officials as a factor in the Sidonian insurgency, and Marco Simón to the use of humiliation by the Romans in Spain.

There were examples of uprisings that were led by peasants, the urban poor, and slaves, and can be characterized, even by conservative writers, as "popular" revolts. These were, however, relatively rare in antiquity, especially if we do not include what were merely riots or homicides. One of the features of such incidents in modern times, however, has been that they tend to be reactions of traditional elements of a society to sudden change, even change that would, in theory, benefit the very classes that are rising up. Overall, however, this sort of insurgency is more rare and much less likely to succeed than ones led by elites. We find elites, wealthy landowners, merchants, and priests, as well as tribal and military leaders, involved with, if not leading, many ancient insurgencies. Examples in this volume include the revolts of Sidon against the Persians, of the Egyptians against the Ptolemies and of the Jews against the Romans.

Since much contemporary insurgency involves religious motivations, the issue of the relationship between religion with war, and specifically uprising, guerrilla war and terrorism, is of great interest to both academics and strategists. It should be noted that in many respects, the distinction between the religious and the political, and indeed the religious and the ethnic can be blurry. Wiesehöfer notes that while ethnicity played a role in the relations of

15 For the role of humiliation in the Iraq Insurgency following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein in 2003, see Vincent (2004) 67–74.

the Phoenicians with other groups, such as the Greeks, Egyptians, and Persians, these were linked fundamentally to political ones. Many secular, and even overtly anti-religious, political movements exhibit a close functional similarity to religions, and many insurgencies that define themselves in religious terms reflect underlying political structures and ideologies. In addition, religions and ethnicities are often linked, and are reinforcing elements, especially under the stress of war and conflict. Frank Russell stresses the Roman view of the Jews as an ethnicity, and not a religion, and its effect on their attitude to them.

Ethnic animosities also play a key role in insurgencies. Often, even when religion, ideology or politics have a part and are a rallying cry, there are ethnic factors underlying them: Tacitus notes the natural hatred of neighboring ethnic groups (Tac. *Hist*. 5.1). Ethnicity plays an important role in ancient military history and the history of war, but much ethnic scholarship is based on theoretical bases—such as Critical Race Theory—both inapplicable to ancient times (except in the crudest way) and counterproductive for understanding ethnic identity and animosity in ancient or modern times. In discussing the Assyrian attempts to win over tribes and officials to end insurgencies, Melville quotes David Galula "politics becomes an active instrument of operations."[16] This, of course, is simply the application of Von Clausewitz to the practice of counterinsurgency. Politics is inextricable from all wars, but this is especially true in insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Nevertheless, religious ideas play an important role in insurgency and indeed in terrorism. This is true even in the case of pagan religions, but becomes especially important with monotheistic faiths. Messianic ideas in Judaism are clearly important in their revolts both against the Herodians and the Romans. There is an important and significant change that occurs in Jewish apocalyptic belief at some point subsequent to the Biblical Book of Daniel, which was written around 167 BCE. There is a work called *The War of the Sons of Light Against the Sons of Darkness*, found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QM). The army of the Sons of Righteousness is described in detail. Here there is no talk of kings, the army of God is led directly by God. While there is a Leader of the People, the battle is won by and for God Himself. This is only suggestive, but the idea of God's rule bypassing kings and going directly to the righteous is one Josephus expressed explicitly in what he calls the Fourth Philosophy:

> But of the fourth of the philosophies, Judas the Galilean was the author. This school agrees in all other things with the Pharisaic notions, except

16 Galula (1964) 9.

> that they have an unconquerable passion for liberty, and say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord (Jos. *AJ* 18.1.6).

What is the significance of the shift from God is the King of Kings to God is the only King? I would argue that this allows for charismatic religious leaders to organize groups of followers without reference to place or state. Religious ideas are now free to move around, and need not have the change of government or religious institution as their goal.

Melville notes the importance of institutions in the studies of insurgencies. The oldest political structure in human history is the tribe, the organization of hunter-gatherers. While the ancients often saw peoples living on their margins as hunters, and thus essentially savage, in fact agriculture and pastoralism had almost completely replaced hunting and gathering by 3000 BCE in the core regions of Europe, Asia and Africa. The term "tribe" however, continues to be used in English to describe various political structures, up to and including contemporary times.[17] The tribe is organized around kinship, and leadership tends to be communal, or rather oligarchic, as usually the "chiefs" are drawn from a restricted group of families. Tribes figure through history both as insurgents, and as the allies of insurgencies and of counterinsurgencies. Melville discusses the Assyrian use of a Chaldean tribe, the Bit-Dakkuri, in suppressing a Babylonian revolt.

The seminal study of tribal warfare, H. H. Turney-High's *Primitive War*, distinguished it from "Modern War" by the lack of discipline (in the sense of punishment for disobedience) and of command and control. Warriors (as tribal fighters are often termed) follow a charismatic leader voluntarily.[18] This view has been widely accepted, but needs more study. While the clan structure of the pre-modern Scottish Highlands is distinctive in many respects, it is noteworthy that the chief's agents, the tackmen, coerced the participation of commoners in military campaigns. Elites were the key to the loyalty of both tribes and villages, a point noted by Melville. Certainly, in military situations, such as insurgencies, we need to question the attitude toward tribes-people as "free men."

The most important basic institution of all traditional cultures (Aristotle notwithstanding) was no doubt the village, and the same institutions that organized tax or rent collection among villagers could also plan resistance. It should be noted that in most tribal cultures we meet in antiquity, the village was the basic social and economic unit. Except for some marginal hunting

17 For example, the chapter "Tribes and Clans" in Shultz and Dew (2006) 39–57.

18 Turney-High (1949).

and gathering peoples, only steppe and desert peoples practiced nomadism. Villages were also the primary unit of many city-states, and all kingdoms and empires. Village leadership tends to be hereditary and operates through group meetings or councils. The imposition of discipline is more apparent, but this too may be a function of evidence and academic attention.

While the lack of written evidence retards our understanding of village political structures in most ancient times and places (Hellenistic Egypt being just one possible exception), we do have archaeological remains, as well as analogy with medieval and modern villages. The corresponding unit of the city—the neighborhood—is much less well understood. This is in part due to lack of evidence, either written or archaeological, but also due to the fact that it is often studied under a variety of names: such as the Babylonian *bab* or gate, and the Athenian urban deme. In addition, the political structure of urban neighborhoods has attracted much less scholarly attention in modern times. Wiesehöfer makes the point that the political structure of the city, whether or not a city-state, is key to understanding insurgency in the ancient world. Cities had their own militias, for example the *politikoi stratiotai* of Diodorus Siculus' description of the Sidon revolt (Diod. Sic. 16.42.2). City and local militias are among the most understudied elements of pre-modern warfare, and this is especially true of antiquity. Their role in insurgency and counterinsurgency deserves more attention.

Villages and neighborhoods, however, lack some of the basic elements necessary for military success. One is a level of discipline necessary to withstand the stresses of combat or extended stretches of military or quasi-military service. Regular armed forces play an important role in uprisings, and not only in trying to suppress them. Auxiliary military units, often based on ethnicity, feature in insurgency.[19] We know that Jewish Royal troops deserted and fed the revolt against the Herodians in 4 BCE. Johstono notes that Egyptian soldiers called *machimoi* played a key role in the revolt against the Ptolemies. This term refers to settler-soldiers, and this institution, which has its origins in Assyrian and Babylonian practice and continued into the Roman period, played an important role in ancient insurgency and counterinsurgency. This requires more attention and study.

The importance of religious structures, especially the growth of such institutions as the synagogue and church, in the organization and leadership of ancient uprisings has not been sufficiently recognized. While embedded within villages and neighborhoods, synagogues and churches, and indeed

19 Melville, chapter three, analyzes a letter in which a Gurrean auxiliary officer from Anatolia killed an Assyrian superior and flees along with some of his men.

pagan temples in some circumstances, provided an alternate means for the structuring of rebel forces and leadership. Johstono notes that Egyptian priests played a role in the revolt against the Ptolemies, and Jewish priests were leaders, at least initially in the Great Revolt of 66–73 CE against the Romans. The role of the synagogue as an organizational tool in the Diaspora Revolts of the late First and early Second Centuries (for example, the War of Kitos), deserves further study.

Couper discusses Christianity and insurgency in the context of the Bagaudae revolts, but the idea that the Christianity of the first two centuries CE represented a radical political movement, while recently put forth in a popular work by Reza Aslan, has not gained wide scholarly acceptance.[20] Nevertheless, a study of its early organizational history, as reflected in Paul's Letters and the Acts of the Apostles, as well as in other ante-Nicene literature, can be illustrative of the way that synagogues—and later churches—served as means of spreading ideas, connecting followers and sometimes organizing violence. Christian anti-state violence does figure in later centuries, for example in the *Circumcelliones* of North Africa, and the attacks of monks on pagan temples. Given the relatively plentiful sources on the Late Roman period in Church literature, there is certainly under-used material available to students of insurgency.

Modern discussions of insurgency often link it to guerrilla warfare, characterized by the ambush and the raid. Contact with large units and well-defended fortifications are generally avoided, and attacks targeted at isolated units and supply lines. While sometimes thought of as a modern phenomenon, in many respects this type of warfare is the earliest known. The ambush is probably the oldest type of group conflict, followed closed by the raid.[21] The elements of "primitive warfare" are not replaced by, but incorporated into, more sophisticated types of military conflict. Richardson cites letters from Mari describing counter-raids by the forces of that early city-state against pastoralists. While people marginal to those in settled states and empires, whether in hills, deserts or steppes, as well as those with "tribal" or clan organizations stereotypically use the ambush and raid, state armies also used these tactics, and they were seen as part of the tool kit of the ancient commander.

Guerrilla forces generally "live off the land" (often a euphemism for stealing crops). Whether or not the peasants are supportive of the insurgents, it is clear that depriving them of food would lead them to surrender, attack superior forces, or leave the area. As with the siege of cities, in ancient contexts (and all

20 Aslan (2013).

21 Kelly (2000).

too often in modern ones) this involves the wholesale destruction of crops and farmlands. As the chapters in this study reveal, virtually all ancient societies practiced devastation of enemy territory, including that of insurgents.

Since the ambush and raid were also used by robbers, some variant of the expression "bandit-like war" was used in antiquity to refer to what we would call guerrilla war. Melville's analysis of Assyrian terms for rebellion notes that the Assyrians used the term *parrisu*, meaning a criminal or a bandit, to refer to insurgents. As in modern times, both bandits and insurgents flourished in inhospitable and sparsely populated regions, such as mountains and deserts (note the story of King David). Richardson cites Tukulti-Ninurta's description of a grueling campaign in the mountains to the north of Assyria and Josephus uses the same term "bandit-like war" (*lestrikos polemos*). One of the modern terms for guerrilla war and insurgency was "*petite guerre*" or "small war," and Polybius' use of the phrase "small events" to refer to the Egyptian insurgency, noted by Johstono, is reminiscent of this (Polyb. 14.12.5).[22]

Criminal gangs played, and continue to play, an important role in insurgencies. As noted in the introduction and in Russell's discussion of Josephus, Eric Hobsbawm's idea of the "social bandit" has been highly influential, but has also been severely criticized. It is perhaps past time to abandon the notion. It is probably more useful to view bandit gangs as an element of network-centric insurgencies, and a study of bandits and gangs as quasi-military organizations would help us better understand their role in insurgencies. The rise of King David, as described in the Second Book of Samuel, is illuminating in this regard, and there are certainly many other sources waiting for analysis.

While what we now call guerrilla and irregular warfare was certainly an element of ancient insurgency, we often find rebels facing state forces in pitched battles and undertaking sieges of cities and fortified spots. Thus, it does not seem useful to confine the term insurgent to guerrillas or terrorists, but rather understand that as in any type of war, in insurgency the goal is victory. Insurgents, like state forces will adjust their strategy and tactics to what they believe (sometimes wrongly) will be to their military advantage. Both Russell and Couper note the problems in identifying what was an insurgency and what was its nature in ancient times, and Howe notes that applying the term insurgency uncritically to ancient conflicts can often obscure matters. Indeed, in a recent study, M. L. R. Smith and D. M. Jones have argued against the idea

22 As noted by Johstono, the Ptolemies themselves did not refer to the revolt as a war but as a *tarache* or "disturbance."

of viewing insurgency and counterinsurgency as distinct in nature from war in general.[23]

In any case, ancient armies were not unprepared for dealing with what has been termed "assymetrical" warfare. Columns of troops routinely marched with scouts, and flank and rear guards, to prevent ambush. Camps and supply depots were fortified against raids, and supply columns were guarded. Of course, this was the ideal, and some ancient forces, due to lack of resources, poor leadership, or long periods of peace, might neglect security, allowing for the initial success of a guerrilla force. As in modern times, however, insurgents were normally at a disadvantage when facing a sufficiently large, well-trained, disciplined, and competently led army. Drawn-out insurgencies can often be attributed to a state using too few troops to hold too large an area, using poorly trained and undisciplined troops, and bad generalship. Both in ancient and modern times, uprisings succeed less because of strength on the part of the insurgents, but rather weakness on the part of the state forces.

In antiquity, state forces used many of the counterinsurgency techniques supposedly invented in modern times. Fortifications, such as walls and blockhouses, were used to hem in guerrilla forces in the wars of Caesar and in the Bar Kokhba revolt, for example. Melville notes the importance of intelligence and the use of agents recruited from the enemy by the Assyrians. The very existence of reports on enemy activity contained in letters shows the importance of intelligence. She notes that the Assyrian bureaucracy could keep track of individuals even at the margins of their empire. Modern counterinsurgency has developed the technique of moving and guarding the peasant population to prevent the support, willing or not, of guerrillas.[24] This method does not seem to have been used in ancient counterinsurgency. On the other hand, the use of deportation, that is the removal of a conquered state's elite and military forces into another land, was common.[25] The movement of populations from one part of an empire to another is necessarily a deliberate and purposeful act, as it requires a great deal of logistical planning. Melville notes the existence of an Assyrian official called the "mule-stable man," who organized deportations. Rather than moving the peasants away from the insurgents, this is moving the insurgents, or rather potential insurgents, away from their peasantry.

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23 Smith and Jones (2015).

24 This practice is notable in the concentration camps used by the Spanish in Cuba and the British in South Africa, among many other examples. Protected villages and hamlets were used in Malaya and Vietnam.

25 As noted by Richardson in chapter two.

While the supposedly Roman proverb of "divide and conquer" does not appear until the early modern period, the idea of taking advantage of factions in an enemy force has been part of war from the earliest times. Factionalism plays an especially important role in insurgency and counterinsurgency and deserves more study. Insurgent forces are generally made up of a more or less loose alliance of forces, representing different clans, tribes, religions and ideologies, *mutatis mutandis*. It has been said that all rebellions are, in a sense, civil wars, and in addition to the factions of the insurgents, there will be elements of the group associated with it that remain loyal to the government. The literature on the factions of Classical Greece (aristocrats and democrats), in Republican Rome (*optimates* and *populares*) and Late Rome (Greens and Blues) could be usefully mined for their relevance to insurgency studies.

"Hearts and Minds" entered the vocabulary of counterinsurgency in the Malayan insurgency of 1948–1960, but the idea that one way to prevent or end insurgency is good government is quite ancient. It features in the "Good King" literature of Egypt and Israel, as well as in philosophical and quasi-philosophical (such as Xenophon's *Life of Cyrus*), works of the Greeks and Romans. Melville notes that even the Assyrians, renowned for their use of terror, tried to create a stable political and economic environment as a disincentive to revolt. This conclusion—based on the study of letters—undercuts the vision expressed in royal inscriptions. It emphasizes the importance of focusing on what a culture or state does, and not simply what its literature says it does. Johstono quotes a quite remarkable letter from a leading Ptolemaic financial official, the *dioketes*, who "explain[s] how consistent and efficient administration could bring an end to the time of crisis." This reflects a sophisticated approach to both government and counterinsurgency.

Russell refers to a suggestion I made in an unpublished paper that the Romans may have encouraged, or at least deliberately allowed, the development of Talmudic Judaism as a means of undermining a dangerous, Messianic, element of the Jewish religion. The Talmud, around which modern Judaism is built, has its core in the Mishnah, which was edited by Judah ha-Nasi around 220 CE. In the tractate *Baba Kama* (113b) we read a decision attributed to the third century rabbi, Mar Samuel: *Dina de-malkhutah dina*, that is, "The law of the land," in this case Roman law, "is the same as religious law." There are exceptions, of course; Jews cannot follow a secular law that forbids a commandment, for example circumcision, but in general, this instantiates the idea that rulers, even evil and anti-Semitic ones, have been put in place by God and must be obeyed. In his chapter, Turner notes the Druidic prophecies of the end of the world, as well as the perception that the Roman Empire was collapsing. This is

a remarkable parallel to the Jewish Messianic impulses that helped drive their insurgencies in the first and second centuries.

The Talmud also describes how, during the siege of Jerusalem in 70 CE, Yohanan ben Zakkai sought permission from the Roman commander, Titus, to establish a religious school at Javneh (*Gittin* 56a–b). Titus did not necessarily give his permission with the idea of creating a moderate alternative to the Fourth Philosophy, but it had that function. Seth Schwartz emphasizes the fact the Rabbinic Judaism, and the institution of the synagogue grow up in the third century, and that this was not only allowed by the Romans, but encouraged by them.[26] Jews became part of the Decurion class that was the strength of the empire, and enjoyed a period of peace and prosperity that only ended with the rise of the Christian Empire. It is not necessary to think that the Romans did this as a conscious strategy, but there is no question that they developed policies that fostered the growth of Talmudic Judaism, that taught that Jews were required to obey secular authority. In a possible analogy, Russell refers to the Roman treatment of the Druids, and their development of the shrine of the Three Gauls at Lugdunum.

A deeper understanding of the phenomenon of ancient insurgency, and of pre-modern terrorism, insofar as it existed, will require more interdisciplinary work, indeed communication between academia and other institutions, such as militaries. Just as military theorists can use ancient sources naively, academics, especially those without a background in military history (much less personal experience) can deeply misunderstand military life, culture and institutions. The military academies, that arose in the eighteenth and nineteenth century to train naval and army officers, have spawned a world-wide system of military higher education, with not only its own campuses, but its own journals and conferences. The American military, for example, has been much more successful in integrating academic rigor, and indeed incorporating civilian scholars and scholarships, than universities have been in working with military institutions.

Military and security theorists do not generally rely on up-to-date scholarship on ancient insurgency and terrorism. More cooperation between institutions, more cross-publication in journals and attendance at each other's meetings would be useful.[27] More communication and sharing of ideas will

26 Schwartz (2004).

27 The Society for Military History, and its *Journal of Military History*, already is a place in which uniformed and civilian thinkers interact.

only improve our understanding of the past, and our ability to understand and deal with present and future challenges.

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